

Northern Ireland

**Social**

**Care**

**Council**

# Annual Report and Accounts

1 April 2022 - 31 March 2023



# Welcome

**We are the Northern Ireland Social Care Council. We are a public body, set up by the Department of Health in 2001 as part of their policy to improve standards across social work and social care services.**

**We are helping to raise standards in social work and social care by:**

- **Registering the workforce** – there are 44,000 people working in social work and social care in Northern Ireland. All of these people must be registered with the Social Care Council to be able to work in their job role. Everyone on the Social Care Council Register has been checked to make sure they are suitable to work in their job role.
- **Regulating standards in the workforce** - every registered person must keep to the standards we set for their work and must keep updating their skills and knowledge to help them do their job. They must also meet the Social Care Council standards for their behaviour. This includes how they treat the people they provide services for and how they behave towards their work colleagues.
- **Setting standards for social work education** – we set the standards for the Degree in Social Work courses in Northern Ireland. We also approve education and training for social workers to support them in their career development.
- **Promoting workforce learning and development** – we work with our stakeholders to develop training and learning to support social workers and social care workers to develop their skills and knowledge throughout their career.



Published by:  
Northern Ireland Social Care Council, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor,  
James House, 2 Cromac Avenue, Belfast BT7 2JA

Tel: 028 9536 2600  
Website: [www.niscc.info](http://www.niscc.info)

© NISCC copyright 2023.

This information is licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0. To view this licence visit: [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3/)

Any enquiries regarding this publication should be sent to Northern Ireland Social Care Council, 4th Floor James House, 2 Cromac Avenue, Belfast BT7 2JA or email: [comms@niscc.hscni.net](mailto:comms@niscc.hscni.net)

**Northern Ireland Social Care Council Accounts  
for the year ended 31 March 2023**

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

30th August 2023

# Contents

<b>Chair's Introduction</b>	<b>Page 3</b>
<b>Glossary - Words we use to describe our work</b>	<b>Page 5</b>
<b>Section 1 – Performance report</b>	<b>Page 7</b>
• Chief Executive's Statement on Organisational Performance for 2022-23	Page 8
• Personal and Public Involvement (PPI) Report for 2022-23	Page 13
• Performance Analysis (Risks, Objectives, Trends and Key Performance Indicators)	Page 16
<b>Section 2 – Accountability report</b>	<b>Page 51</b>
<b>Corporate governance report</b>	
• Director's report	Page 51
• Statement of Accounting Officer responsibilities	Page 57
• Governance statement	Page 58
• Audit and Risk Assurance Committee report	Page 70
<b>Remuneration and staff report</b>	
• Remuneration report for year ended 31 March 2023	Page 72
• Staff report	Page 78
<b>Assembly accountability and audit report</b>	
• Assembly Disclosure Notes	Page 83
• Certificate and Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General to the Northern Ireland Assembly	Page 84
<b>Section 3 – Annual Accounts for year ended 31 March 2023</b>	<b>Page 88</b>
• Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure for year ended 31 March 2023	Page 90
• Statement of Financial position at 31 March 2023	Page 92
• Statement of Cash flows for year ended 31 March 2023	Page 93
• Statement of Changes in Taxpayers Equity for year ended 31 March 2023	Page 94
• Notes to the Accounts for year ended 31 March 2023	Page 95
<b>Appendices</b>	
Appendix 1 – Board membership	Page 131
Appendix 2 – Organisational structure	Page 132
Appendix 3 – Risk management matrix	Page 133

## Chair's Introduction

**Hello, as Chair of the Northern Ireland Social Care Council, I am proud to be able to present in this Annual Report the delivery of a significant programme of work to manage standards and registration for the 44,000 people approved by the Social Care Council to provide social work and social care services across Northern Ireland.**



**As the regulatory body for social workers and social care workers practising here, everything we do is focused on high quality, safe and effective care. This report evidences the difference that our work has made towards developing a thriving, capable and compassionate social work and social care workforce that makes a unique contribution to the care and protection of people in need.**

On behalf of the Social Care Council Board and staff, I would like to acknowledge the valuable contribution made by each of the social workers and social care workers registered on our Social Care Register who continue to provide vital services every day across Northern Ireland regardless of the circumstances around them. Social workers and social care workers are delivering high quality care to everyone in Northern Ireland at an extremely difficult time for all of us – and the value of these roles could not be more important than it is today.

Social Work and Social Care matters – it matters to the thousands of children and adults who receive care and support every day. As we continue to navigate our way through the impact of Covid19 and the increasing financial pressures faced by society, this care and support is even more vital. The challenge, however, is how to deliver safe, quality care in a system that is under strain. Financial and workforce pressures are prevalent across the Health and Social Care (HSC) System and impact on the delivery of social work and social care services. Strategies to support social work and social care workforce recruitment and retention are vital to secure the delivery of safe, quality care and protect the health and wellbeing of our registrants. The Social Care Council must be responsive to these challenging and changing circumstances. Our focus is on the safety, quality and improvement of social work and social care services through a well-trained and supported workforce.

During 2022-23, we consulted with our stakeholders to develop our Strategic Plan for 2023-27. Our Strategic Plan for 2023- 2027 sets out our ambitions and priorities for the next four years. We are ambitious for the Social Care Council and for our registrants and through our work we will seek to support the HSC Improvement and Transformation Programme positioning social work and social care as key enablers in transforming our health and social care services. We have worked in collaboration with the Department of Health (DoH) to established a new 'Social Care Collaborative Forum' whose purpose is to deliver reform, address service pressures, promote co-ordinated activity and collaboration, and provide strategic oversight, direction and governance. Our Strategic Plan was developed at a significant period in the history of the Social Care Council. In addition to reaching its 21st birthday milestone in October 2022, the organisation participated in a review of our services by the DoH. This review confirmed our role and function as the regulator for social work and social care in Northern Ireland and set some progressive recommendations supporting our ambitions, which we will deliver through this Strategic Plan.

Partnership is at the heart of our work. We will deliver our strategic priorities through the invaluable and enduring partnership arrangements we have in place, working with our registrants, people who use services and carers, providers of social work and social care services, education and training providers, and with Government, all of whom have contributed to the progress we have made to date. Our ambition is to be a regulator of excellence, one we and our registrants can be proud of. The new strategy will be flexible and relevant, and it will shape our work for the next four years as we seek to make a difference for our registrants and the people who use social work and social care services. I would like to thank everyone who took the time to give their views and helped to shape the 2023-27 Strategic Plan.

## Chair's Introduction

This is the third year in which the Social Care Council had to deliver most of its services remotely as a result of the COVID pandemic restrictions. Along with stakeholders, we have adapted to new ways of working, with tasks being delivered online, and engagement through video conferencing and webinars. Throughout the year, as restrictions eased, it was possible to reinstate some face-to-face engagement with our stakeholders and partner organisations.

We have continued to listen to our stakeholders and developed our services and resources to support them in delivering social care services. The online registration system was refreshed to provide further guidance for employers and new applicants, as well as for those maintaining their registration. During the year, the Learning Zone was updated and new resources added to assist registrants in their ongoing learning and development. Our digital communications channels have been key in reaching our registrants, employers and stakeholder groups to ensure they were kept connected with the services, events and resources we were providing. We also provided support for the Department of Health (DoH), delivering communications campaigns for the Reform of Adult Social Care. Successful media campaigns were delivered online, in print and on local media to share stories about the valuable contribution that social care makes to individuals, families and communities. Social work careers were promoted online and on local radio to encourage more people to join the profession.

On behalf of the Social Care Council Board, I would like to commend all of the staff for their efforts and their undoubted commitment to our vision of quality social care services and outcomes for everyone. I also want to put on record my appreciation of the leadership, support and direction provided during this most challenging year by our senior leadership team; Patricia Higgins, CEO, Declan McAllister, Director of Registration and Corporate Services and Marian O'Rourke, Director of Regulation and Standards.

Finally, on behalf of the Board members and staff, I would like to offer my sincere thanks to all involved in our key partnerships (Professional in Practice, Leaders in Social Care and Registrants), who worked tirelessly to ensure the business of the Social Care Council continued without interruption. May I also offer my sincere thanks to those involved in the Participation Partnership who continue to support our work (further detail is included in the PPI report on page 13).

There is no doubt 2023-24 will be another challenging year for the Social Care Council, as we adapt to a new office environment at James House in Belfast, and for the wider social care sector as we respond to work and other pressures. I am confident we will adapt and change together to ensure that the social work and social care workforce has the skills and values required to deliver high quality services for the people of Northern Ireland.



**Paul Martin**

Chair, Northern Ireland Social Care Council

## Glossary – words we use to describe our work

<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.
<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 – is a programme of learning, sharing and support that uses 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>GDPR</b>	General Data Protection Regulation – the legislation around holding and using personal Information.
<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 mobile applications 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.

**Glossary**

<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>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.



## 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 how the Social Care Council business priorities were delivered during 2022-23.

The performance report for 2022-23 covers four key areas:

1. **Chief Executive's Statement on performance for 2022-23** - setting out 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;
3. **Performance analysis** - providing a balanced and comprehensive analysis of performance during the year, impact of COVID on service delivery, trends identified and actions identified for the coming year;
4. **KPI summary** – Achievement against objectives and key performance indicators for 2022-23

**Our work is themed around five key areas. An overview and commentary on how we performed against the objectives for these strategic themes during 2022-23 is set out in the following pages.**

### **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.'

## Chief Executive's Statement on organisational performance for 2022-23



**This Annual Report for the period April 2022 to March 2023 reflects a successful achievement of our business objectives across another very challenging year. It includes commentary on the supports provided for the registered workforce to ensure they continued to provide front line social care services. It is encouraging to see the difference that our work has made in the last year for both the registered workforce and for people receiving care. 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.**

Planning for 2022-23 was based on a flexible approach to service delivery, applying a combination of remote working and face-to-face engagement as public health restrictions permitted. There were many positive outcomes such as the increased use of digital engagement, which enabled us to involve a wider range of registrants and stakeholders in our seminars and events. We have drawn on the learning from the changes we have made and are committed to integrating the best of these new practices as we move forward into the new business year. Efficiencies gained from technology will be invaluable in the coming year. The Social Care Council, similar to most other organisations will be working within very tight financial constraints in 2023-24 and we will ensure that resources are used in the areas they will provide the greatest benefit.

During 2022-23, there was significant time invested in developing campaigns to raise awareness of the valuable contribution social workers and social care workers make to our community and our economy. The social work advertising campaign in the Autumn challenged people to 'Think Social Work' and the social care campaign has shone a light on the positive difference made by social care workers every day to the lives of people and in our communities. We provided support to practitioners, researchers and service commissioners to encourage stakeholders to engage with their work. Social Care Council staff and Participation Partnership members have played a key role in the UK wide review of social care, providing feedback to focus groups and supporting engagement events for the UK Impact project for social care.

I too would like to acknowledge the commitment made by my staff in delivering services throughout this year. Each person has played their part to help make a difference for our registrants, their employers and the people they provide services for. We worked very closely with social work and social care leaders to understand what supports were needed for the workforce and, through partnership working, we adapted our services and developed resources to meet their needs. We will continue to work in partnership with providers of social work and social care services, with government departments and education providers to ensure our registrants are supported to carry out their work safely and effectively and are recognised for the contribution they make every day on the front line of social work and social care.

Our assessment of progress against business objectives is made 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 telephone interviews. Some of the 2022-23 highlights are illustrated overleaf. More detailed commentary for progress against Key Performance Indicators is included in page 46.

**Business Highlights for 2022-23 include:**

**Stakeholders supported**

**59,291** people supported with registration queries  
**93%** positive feedback on the service provided



**Social Care Register maintained**

for **\*44,461** registrants:  
 \*Register totals 31/3/23



**37,148** social care workers  
**6539** social workers  
**774** social work students  
**101** decisions uploaded to the Register

**Registrations processed**

**19,962** registration applications/renewals processed  
**88%** processed within 20 days  
**86%** of fees paid online



**Fitness to Practise concerns addressed**

**493** referrals triaged (95% within 3 days)  
**341** cases closed (94% closed consensually)  
**27** Interim Orders granted  
**21** Fitness to Practise committees/hearings



**Social work and social care careers promoted**

**22** In-person careers events  
**14** online careers information sessions  
**8,243** hits on Learning Zone careers resource  
**292** students enrolled on Social Work Degree



**Social work education standards assured**

**3** Degree courses  
**21** Designated practice learning providers  
**16** PiP Programmes  
**24** AYE Audits



**Expertise and Leadership provided to support strategic projects**

- Social Care Collaborative Forum
- UK Social Care Impact
- NI Local Impact
- Social Care Echo
- Leaders in Social Care
- Social Work Leaders
- Social Work Strategy subgroup
- Apprenticeships & Trainees panel

**Finances managed effectively**

**Break-even** achieved with a £10k underspend  
**92%** of invoices paid within 10 days  
**99%** of invoices paid in 30 days



## Chief Executive's Statement on organisational performance for 2022-23

### 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. As part of the Risk Management Strategy, the Board set the strategic risks and assessed the risk appetite for the organisation. The Risk Appetite Statement and Matrix in Appendix 3 of this report sets out the level of risk with which the Social Care Council aimed to operate across the key areas of finance, compliance, safety, service delivery and reputation in order to deliver on the strategic business themes in 2022-23.

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. Risks, controls and actions have been reviewed regularly by the Risk Management Committee. Summary of the assurances provided by our risk management processes is detailed in the Governance Statement on page 66. The Board Audit and Risk Assurance Committee have reviewed the Risk Register and Assurance Framework at each of their meetings. This provides assurance to the Board, our sponsor department and our stakeholders on the organisation's ability to deliver its organisational objectives.

A strategic risk in relation to the management of the impact of the COVID pandemic was included on the Risk Register since March 2020. The Board have been updated throughout the year about COVID and its impact on the business. The risk of business disruption due to COVID is currently rated as Medium Level - 6. COVID restrictions have since been lifted, which has enabled the return to more external engagement and a return to the office environment.

The most significant risks identified during 2022-23 were:

- **Development of social care policy and resourcing of the social care workforce** – external risk arising from the wider sector requiring support from social care council staff
- **Finance** - impact of public sector cost savings plans and the move to James House
- **Workforce development** – impact of short-term contracts used to resource the staff team.
- **Recruitment** – BSO Shared Services (delays in progressing recruitments)
- **Fitness to Practise** – impact of difficulties in recruiting and developing the required skills base

### Assessment and management of high level risks in 2022-23

#### **Development of Social Care Policy /Resourcing of the Social Care Workforce (High Level - 16)**

In 2022-23, this risk was identified by the Board as critical to the overall development of the social care workforce and the possible impact was assessed as High Level - 16. However, it is accepted that although the Social Care Council has a responsibility to provide expert advice that will inform departmental policy and planning, much of this risk is out with the control of the Social Care Council. The Board and management team will be reviewing this strategic risk as part of the development of the new Strategic and Business Plan, with the view to reflecting the controls and actions that are within the statutory remit of the Social Care Council. The Social Care Council will continue to support and develop partnerships and networks for social work and social care leaders to ensure issues, risks and opportunities can be explored and collaboration with policy leads and service commissioners can be facilitated to provide sustainable solutions.

**Chief Executive's Statement on organisational performance for 2022-23**

**Financial Resources – (High Level - 15)**

It was anticipated that the move to James House would generate significant cost savings during 2022-23, mostly in terms of accommodation and services. The delays in moving the organisation to new premises created uncertainty, with the requirement to extend the lease and some supplier contracts to facilitate an additional period in Millennium House. Throughout the year, reviews of financial performance were undertaken with the DoH. This ensured the risks to the financial position and sustainability of the Social Care Council was effectively managed. Variances in budgets were reflected in monthly finance reports. Although breakeven was achieved for 2022-23, with a surplus of £9,737 against RRL it is recognised that the savings required across all HSC organisations will place significant pressure on budgetary management for 2023-24.

**Workforce Development Resourcing (High Level - 12)**

Pressures on staff resources for the Workforce Development Team were identified as a high-level risk. All permanent vacancies were filled during 2022-23, however additional team resources supporting the Adult Social Care Reform work remain on a non-recurrent funding basis. There are still some temporary arrangements in place across the team however these are gradually reducing. This area still remains a risk to the team until more permanent solutions are developed.

**Recruitment Shared Services - risk management (High Level - 12)**

The risk in relation to recruitment has two parts - firstly the service currently being provided by Shared Services Recruitment and Retained Recruitment which has not met the standards expected and secondly, the issues with recruiting and securing the best talent in a very competitive market including for administrative posts. A range of actions have been identified in relation to this risk and a regional audit on recruitment has also been undertaken which will assist with identifying further actions to manage this risk.

**Fitness to Practise – Risk management (High Level - 8)**

A priority for the Social Care Council during 2022-23 was the continued delivery of the statutory functions of workforce registration and regulation as services transitioned away from 100% remote delivery. The relaxation of public health restrictions during the latter part of the year reduced the need for online delivery of all investigations, case management meetings, reviews and proceedings. Throughout the year, the Board supported the adaptation of services to ensure the needs of all participants were reflected in the method of service delivery. Staff capacity had been affected by difficulties in recruiting Fitness to Practise Officers however significant progress was made during 2022-23 to fill vacancies, with three substantive Fitness to Practise Officers being appointed. A business case was also approved by the Department of Health to fund the development of an electronic case management system. The new case management system will be in place by the end of 2023. It is anticipated that during 2023-24, the development of staff capacity along with administrative efficiencies realised by the new case management system will support the management of this risk.

**Chief Executive's Statement on organisational performance for 2022-23**

The Strategic Risk Register also included 11 Medium and 3 Low level strategic risks in relation to BSO shared services, registration maintenance, communications resourcing, partnership working, engagement with service users and carers and COVID-19. All of these risks will be included in the development of a new risk register to support the delivery of the new Strategic Plan for 2023-27.

I am satisfied that the Social Care Council has performed well against the objectives set out in the 2022-23 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,  
Chief Executive,  
Northern Ireland Social Care Council

## Personal and Public Involvement (PPI) report for 2022-23

### Hello from the Participation Partnership

Members of our Partnership are people who receive social care services, or who are a carer for someone. Their role is to influence, advise and challenge the work of the Social Care Council, ensuring that people who use social care services and their carers have an opportunity to shape and contribute to all of our work. 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 across the organisation.



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 across the organisation.

The Partnership is chaired by Sarah Browne (Board Member) and supported by the Director of Registration and Corporate Services, together with a small group of other staff. During 2022-23, two members, Anne Mallon and Gerard McWilliams, undertook the role of Co-Chair for the Partnership. Their responsibilities included planning meetings, leading agenda items and hosting promotional events for the Partnership. The Co-Chair role is a new development for the Partnership, providing an opportunity for members to develop skills in leading and chairing meetings. The Co-Chair role will rotate amongst members on a regular basis. The support of the Co-Chairs was invaluable this year, with the retirement of long-standing Chair, Brenda Maitland.

Participation members are committed to meeting at least every three months and they report back to the Board on their progress. They work alongside Social Care Council staff to provide insight and challenge on the involvement of service user and carers in social work and social care development. Participation members agree their own agenda and all meetings are minuted. Throughout the year, members held their meetings and carried out project work using Zoom, MS Teams, telephone calls and emails. In September, the members were able to resume in-person meetings at James House. Meetings are now offered as a hybrid of online and in-person to enable members to participate in the way that best suits. The Social Care Council recognises the significant amount of personal time and expertise contributed by the members, which provides assurance that all activities are focused on the needs and experiences of those who use social care services.

As well as engaging in the business agenda for the Social Care Council, Participation members shared their personal experience and expertise in projects to provide insight for those planning and delivering social care services, and providing learning and development, including regional and UK-wide reforms for social care services.

#### Highlights from 2022-23:

- Recruitment of two new members to the Partnership, bringing regular membership to ten and adding expert experience of Learning Disability and Physical Disability to the attributes of the membership.
- Participation in the Impact Assembly on the future of adult social care across the UK –online and in-person events and engaging with the project team tasked to deliver £15 million funding to various adult social care projects throughout the UK through evidence-based delivery models
- Presenting at Social Care Council Lunchtime Seminars.

- Engaging with social care workers and employers to learn more about their views on qualifications and a career structure for social care.
- Ongoing review of the Social Work Degree in NI. Members are actively involved in workshops for social work students.
- Support for the Regional PPI Forum to provide personal experiences and expertise to address issues with HSC service delivery.
- Presenting at the European Social Services conference along with colleagues shortlisted as awards finalists for their co-production project
- Making a video presentation for the 2022 PiP Awards ceremony to demonstrate the benefits of meaningful engagement with service users.



- Strategic Plan 2023-27 development - Members participated in workshops to explore how the new Strategic Plan could be developed to engage people who use services and their carers. They also provided expert advice for the engagement team on involving people with lived-experience in the consultation for the Strategic Plan.
- Business Plan development – the Participation Partnership works alongside Social Care Council staff and Board members every year to ensure that service users and carers involvement is reflected in all aspects of the business activities. The members reviewed the objectives for the coming year at their Partnership meetings and participated in a planning session with staff and Board members.
- Development of focus groups for the research into the Review of Student Protocols for the Degree Partnership
- Contributing to the development and content of digital learning resources
- DoH NI 'Future Services' group, focused on adult social care in NI.
- Delivery of the 'In Our Shoes' campaign to raise awareness of the role carried out by the members and encourage more people to get involved with the Participation Partnership. Members developed featuring their work. 'In Your Shoes' was promoted through the Social Care Council digital platforms. The members also delivered two online events to share their work with newcomers.



**Personal and Public Involvement (PPI) Report for 2022-23**

**Looking Ahead**

The members recognise that social workers and social care workers face immense challenges as we begin to move out of lockdown and into a period of recovery. This will require Government and the DoH to learn from the experiences of service users and carers and from frontline staff. The Participation members will support and challenge the Social Care Council to make sure that change is driven by the experience and knowledge of service users and carers. The Participation Partnership looks forward to playing a key role in delivery of the Social Care Council Business Plan 2023-24 and the wider social care improvement agenda.

**Sarah Browne**  
Chair

**Anne Mallon**  
Co-Chair

**Gerard McWilliams**  
Co-Chair

## Performance Analysis for 2022-23

To ensure that our work to support registration, regulation, education and development is effective, the Social Care Council applies a regular cycle of monthly reporting, quarterly evaluation and reflection; learning from experiences and adapting to changing workforce needs to shape how our work is developed and delivered. This performance analysis highlights achievements for the year across each of the strategic themes in our 2022-23 Business Plan. It includes key learning outcomes gained from our review of performance and provides a summary of the success indicators identified for 2022-23. Further information on our objectives for the coming year are published in our Business Plan for 2023-24 (available from our website [www.niscc.info](http://www.niscc.info)).

### Strategic Theme 1 – Standards

#### Objectives for 2022-23 - We said we would

- 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 with people who use services and their carers about the role of the Social Care Council and their confidence in the social care sector.
- Work with employers and RQIA to develop ways to monitor use of the Employer Standards.

Standards are the cornerstone of everything the Social Care Council does to strengthen the professionalism of the registered workforce across Northern Ireland. Plans for our standards work in 2022-23 were underpinned by a programme of face-to-face engagement with registrants, employers and key stakeholder groups to raise awareness and understanding of the Standards. In the first half of the year, the engagement programme primarily used digital technology to continue with our objectives to provide information and support for registrants, their employers and stakeholders, to develop their understanding of the Standards and how they apply in daily practice. As COVID restrictions eased, the team were able to extend engagement to in-person events. In order to strengthen the review of standards in the workplace, Social Care Council Fitness to Practise and Workforce Development Teams met regularly with inspection staff and leads from the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority. These sessions provided opportunities to share learning about workforce standards and to discuss interventions to promote registration and the standards in the workplace.

2022-23 activities to promote the Standards of Conduct and Practice include:

- Information sessions with groups of registrants in their work and home settings.
- Telephone contacts and virtual meetings with teams and management boards to ensure employers and managers were able to support their workers in maintaining the Standards.
- Presentations and discussions with employers, managers and governance leads in the HSC Trusts to promote the Standard of Acceptance and to share learning from Fitness to Practise cases and referrals to ensure that appropriate Fitness to Practise concerns arising during the pandemic were reported and addressed in a timely manner.
- Information, videos and seminars about registration and Standards shared via social media and e-zines.

### Performance analysis for 2022-23

- Social Care ECHO virtual sessions hosted every month for social care managers and supervisors to connect, support and share best practice.
- 'Making the Right Decision' online learning resource was demonstrated to encourage employers and registrants to use this as guidance on applying the standards in work-based scenarios.
- Online learning resources were promoted throughout the year. These include case studies, presentations and discussions on the Standards and maintaining registration.

### Standards – The difference this made in 2022-23

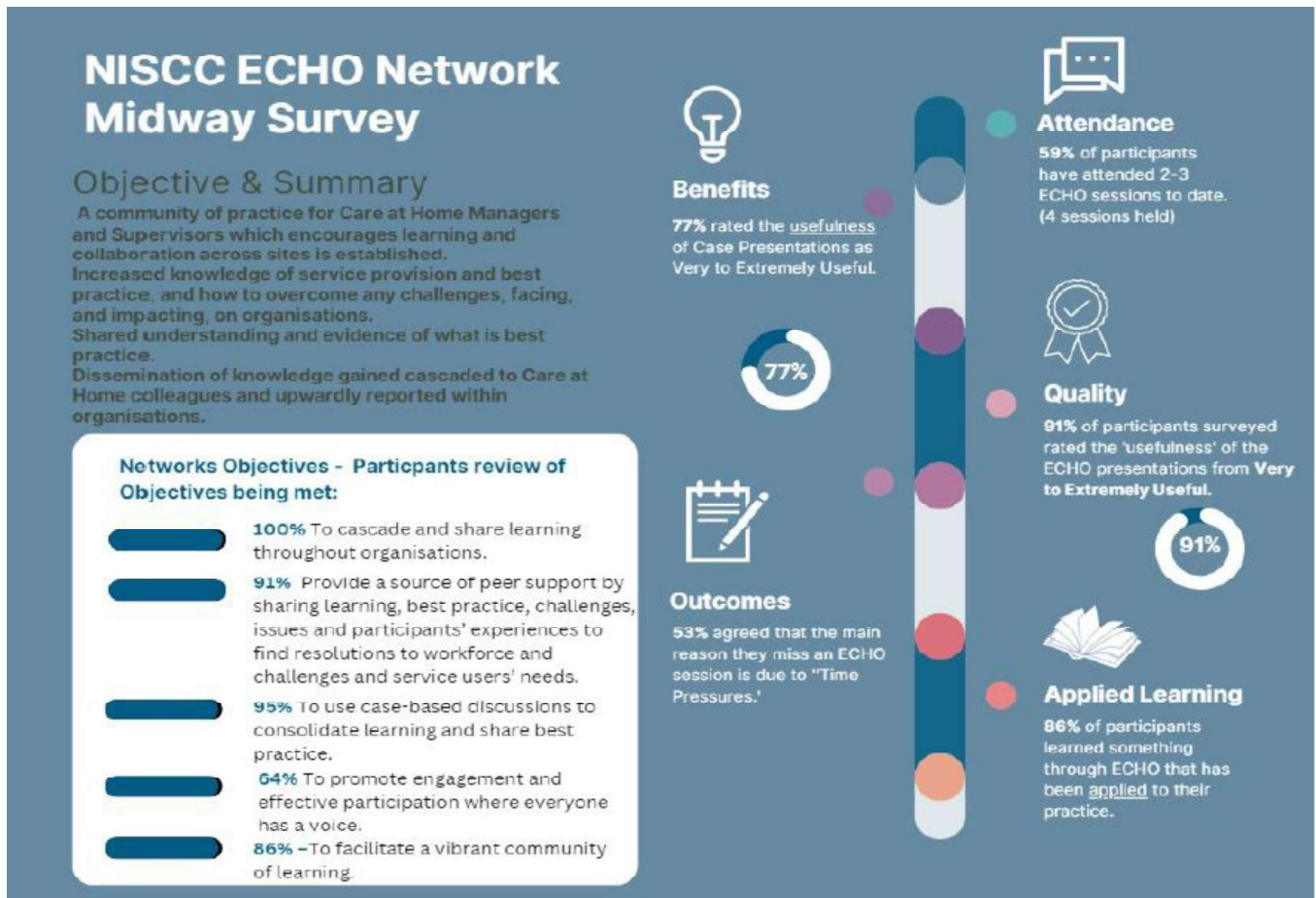
- Social Care Council activities have provided opportunities to inform registrants and employers about the Standards and how they should be used in daily practice.
- Registrants have had the opportunity to improve understanding of their responsibilities as a registered worker and are shown the resources available to help them maintain their Standards.
- Employers and managers are being advised on how they should support their staff to meet their professional standards and can access resources to help them do this.
- Social work students are being introduced to the role of the Social Care Council and their responsibilities as a registrant as part of their degree course.
- Social care managers are being connected through the Social Care ECHO Network and the Social Care Manager's Forum, supporting them to update their knowledge and sharing best practice in supporting staff to meet the Standards.



### Engagement with Standards through the Learning Zone online resources each month:

- 1000 views of the Standards of Conduct and Practice
- 140 views of the Induction Standards
- 130 views of Values and Behaviours of Person-Centred Practice
- 100 views of Making the Right Decision

**Performance analysis for 2022-23**



**Standards – What we have learned in 2022-23**

- Registrants and employers are willing to engage in opportunities to learn about using the standards in daily practice.
- Collaborative work with employers and RQIA is essential in order to share key messages about the applying the standards in the workplace.
- Registrants and employers are at different stages in their social care careers and will have varying levels of understanding about applying the Standards therefore ongoing communication about the Standards is needed to embed the Standards in the workplace.
- During COVID there was no opportunity to promote the Standards amongst people who use services and their carers. The support of the Participation Partnership in developing a Service User and Carer Engagement Strategy in 2023-24 will be a key strength in widening awareness levels outside of the workforce.

**Looking ahead - Indicators of success for Standards in the 2023-24 Business Plan**

- At least 90% of registrants understand and report using the Standards to inform their practice.
- At least 50% of social care registrants report accessing the learning resources to support them in their practice.
- At least 90% of employers understand and report using the Employer Standards to support social workers and social care workers.

Performance analysis for 2022-23

## Strategic Theme 2 – Regulation

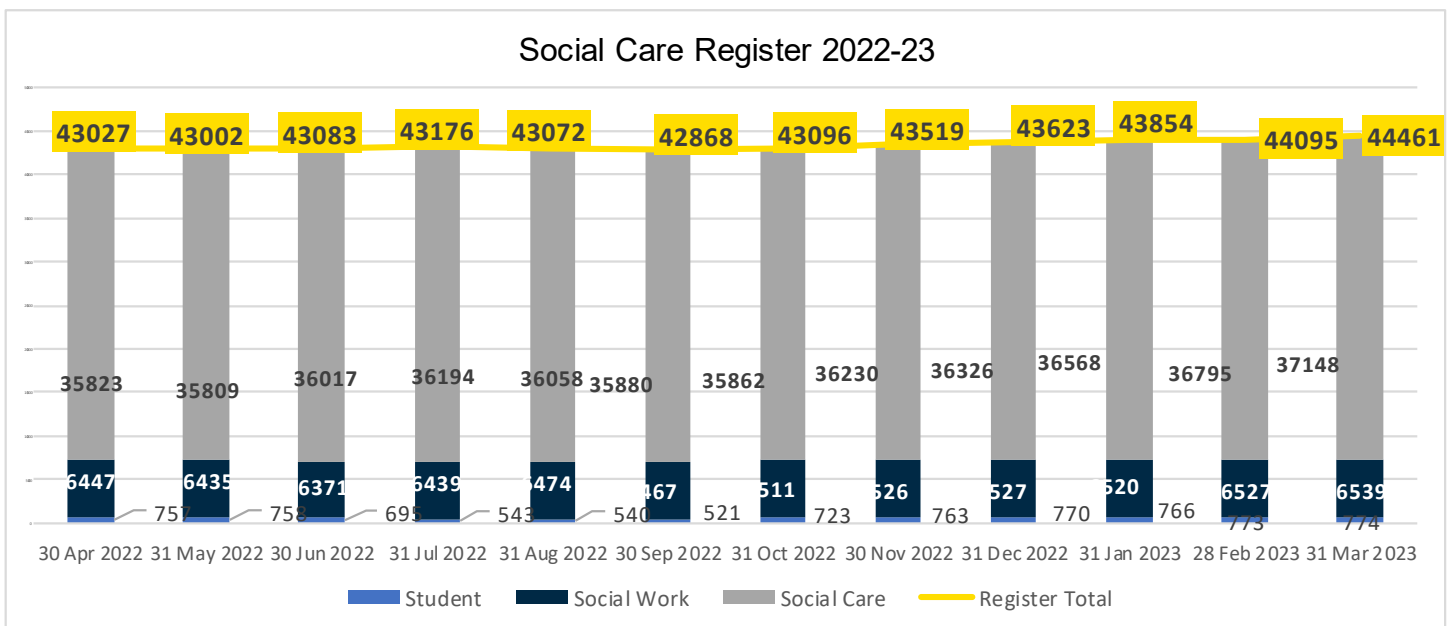
### Objectives for 2022-23 - We said we would

- Support registrants and employers to meet their responsibilities in maintaining registration.
- Deliver an improvement programme to develop the online registration system so that it meets the needs of registrants.
- Review the FtP Rules and processes against best regulatory practice to ensure the continued delivery of a proportionate and efficient system of workforce regulation.
- Through engagement with the DoH, ensure our Fitness to Practise function has the right level of resource to effectively carry out our statutory duties.
- Approve and assure standards of social work education and training at qualifying and post qualifying levels.

Regulation activity spans the three functions of workforce registration, regulation of social work education and workforce fitness to practise. Together, these establish and maintain clear benchmarks for good social work and social care practice. The regulation activity planned for 2022-23 included an extensive programme of work which was delivered online in the first half of the year. Service delivery gradually moved to a combination of online and in-person activity as COVID restrictions eased. Regular reviews were undertaken through the year to ensure continued delivery of regulation that responds to the changes in stakeholder and environmental needs.

### Regulation – Workforce registration 2022-23

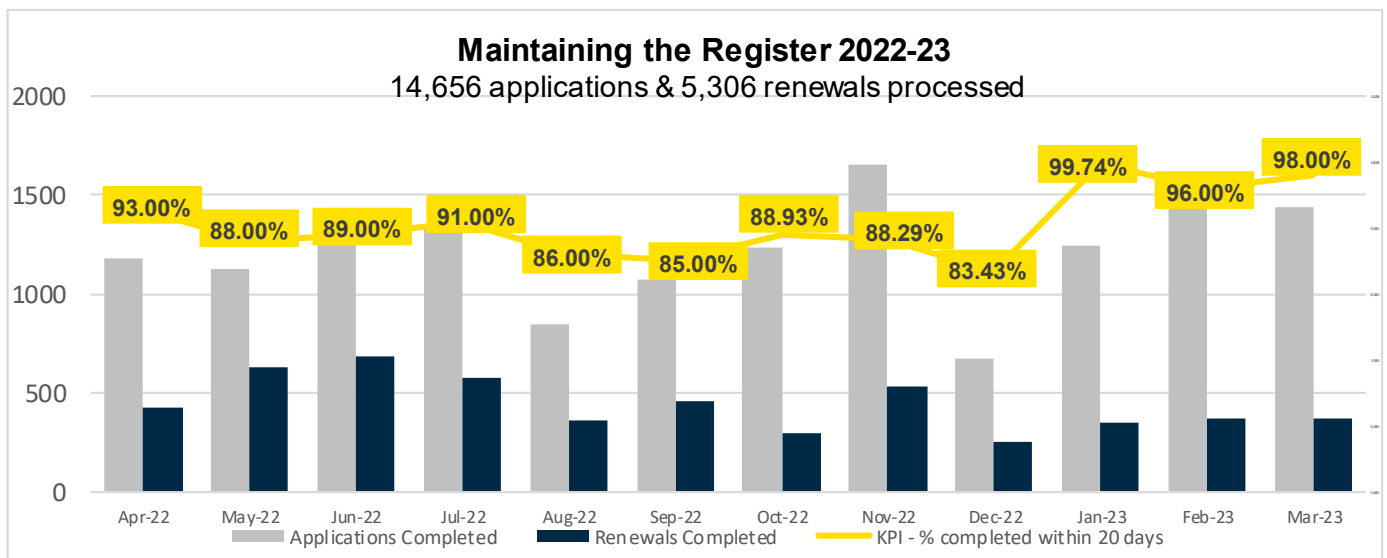
The overall number of people on the Social Care Register increased by around 4% in-year. The full register opened at 42,868 in April 2022 and closed the year at 44,461, comprising of 37,148 social care workers, 6,539 social workers, 774 students. Social care workers make up the largest proportion of the register (84%). The remainder of the register is split between social workers (14%) and social work students (2%). This profile of the register has remained relatively stable since compulsory registration for social work and social care was completed in 2018.



**Performance analysis for 2022-23**

The number of people on the register peaked at 51,700 in March 2021 following the recruitment of temporary workers to support frontline services during the pandemic. Register totals have since settled around 42-44k as temporary workers have returned to pre-COVID employments. The Register is not expected to experience such significant changes in size unless additional staff groups are required to be registered, or a further workforce appeal is required to address COVID pressures.

Registration workflow experienced pressures in Quarters 2 and 3, achieving 87% and 89% against the KPI to process 100% of applications within 20 days. Performance improved steadily in Quarter 4, with 98% of completed applications (5,255) completed within 20 days. Cumulative KPI for the year was 88%. The post of Registration Manager, which had been a temporary appointment was filled permanently in June 2022 and the vacant Deputy Registration Manager posted was recruited in December. The registration team undertook a review of systems and processes during the year and this information was used in a development programme for staff and team leaders. Development work to upgrade the registration database was completed in 2022-23 and migration to the upgraded platform is planned for May 2023. Work is also underway to develop a mobile application to assist registrants in managing their registration details, paying fees etc. These investments in service improvements are expected to support further improvements in workflow for registration processing in 2023-24.



**Registration Matters**



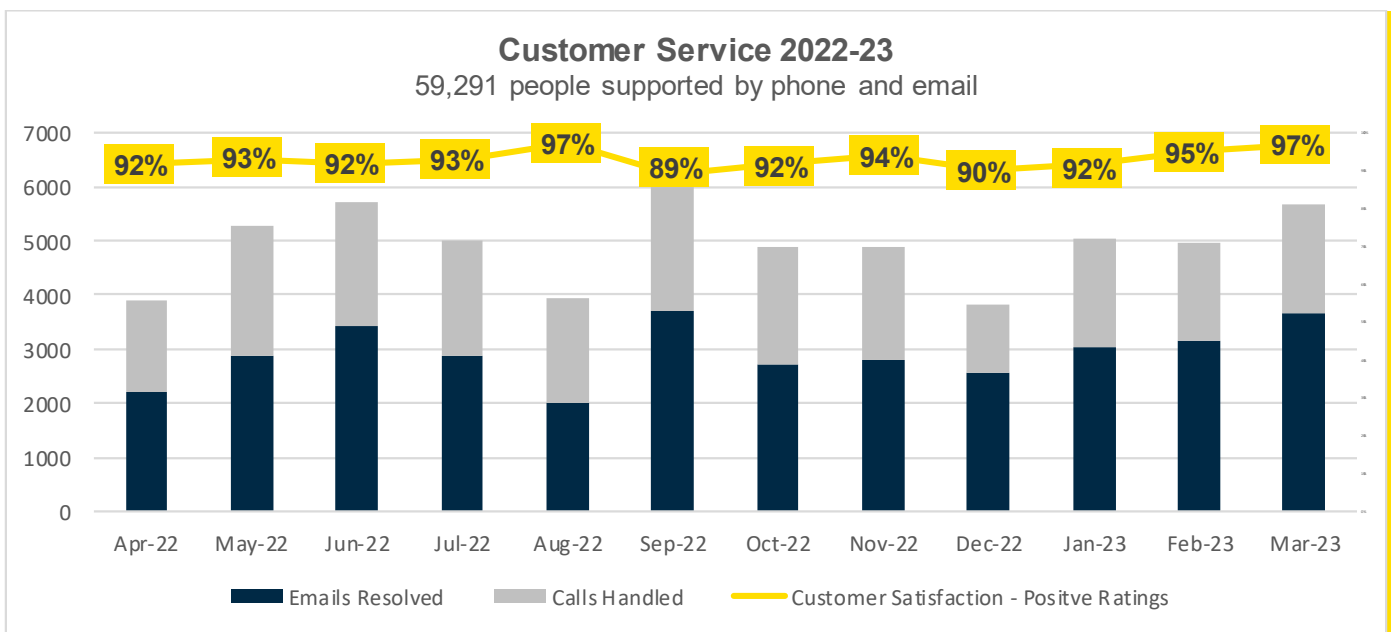
All registrants are required to pay an annual fee to maintain their registration and must also complete a renewal process every three to five years depending on their job role. Reminders are sent to all registrants to assist them in maintaining their registration. 98% of registration applications and 86% of registration fees were completed using the online registration system.

Those who did not pay fees or failed to complete renewal processes were automatically removed from the register after seven days. The application of these automated reminders and removals has assisted in cleansing the register data and ensuring that only those currently practising in social work or social care remain on the live register.

**Performance analysis for 2022-23**

During 2022-23, workforce registration services were delivered primarily through the online registration portal for registrants and employers. 59,291 people were supported with their registration queries during the year. Email was the main channel for providing customer support. 35,056 emails were managed, with an average turnaround of 3 days. 269 emails remained in the system for resolution at the end of March 2023. 24,235 telephone calls were managed by the team during the year. Quarter 4 call handle rate was the lowest in-year at 51%, with January showing the greatest pressure at 47% handle rate. Call handling times ranged from 5-55 minutes, which evidences the complexity of some of the calls being received. A customer appointment system has been developed to enable those who need in-person support to arrange a convenient time to come to the James House building for assistance with their registration query.

1,062 people responded to the Customer survey in 2022-23 and reported 93% positive satisfaction with their experience of the support provided. An average of 10 people per month provided additional commendation for individual staff members. It is noted that the survey responses represent 2% of customers. Further work will be done in 2023-24 to promote the survey more widely.

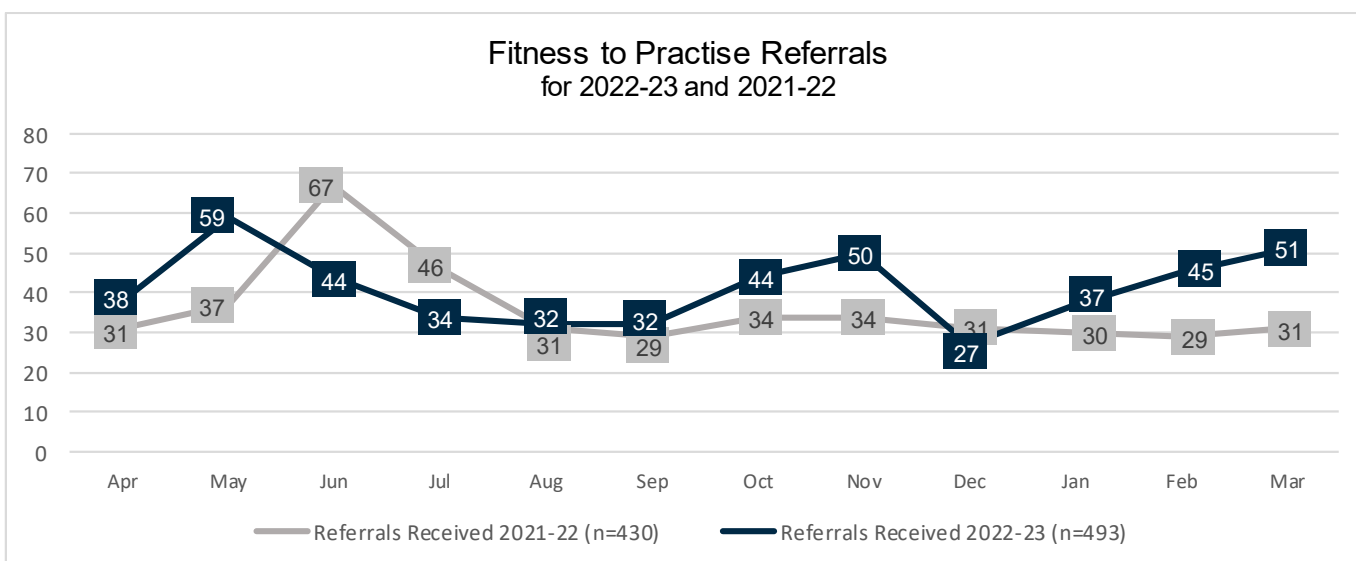


**Performance analysis for 2022-23**

**Regulation – Workforce fitness to practise 2022-23**

The Social Care Council is responsible for investigating concerns that a registrant may not have met the standards required in their conduct or practice. Concerns can be referred by anyone and they can relate to a wide range of issues. Assessment of these concerns is based on whether the registrant remains fit to practise in their role. Fitness to Practise takes account of whether a registrant has the skills, knowledge and character to practise their profession safely and effectively. This approach to regulation provides the option to apply consensually agreed conditions and sanctions that can remediate for lapses in a registrant’s practice. It offers the capacity to resolve concerns about practice issues, or health conditions in a fair and appropriate manner. More serious cases continue to be managed through formal Fitness to Practise hearings and committees.

The Fitness to Practise team assesses all concerns reported to them and follows a series of steps so ensure that all concerns are treated in a robust and appropriate way. The Social Care Council aims to have all referrals risk assessed within three working days of receiving them. High risk concerns are escalated to ensure that risk to the public are minimised. Only a small number of registrants are referred to the Fitness to Practise Team each year (around 1% of the registered workforce). 493 referrals were received in-year, which is a 15% increase in the total referrals received for 2021-22. 31% of these referrals were assessed as not meeting the threshold to require a case to be opened for a Fitness to Practise investigation. This is a 7% increase in the proportion of referrals that resulted in a case for investigation (compared to 2021-22).

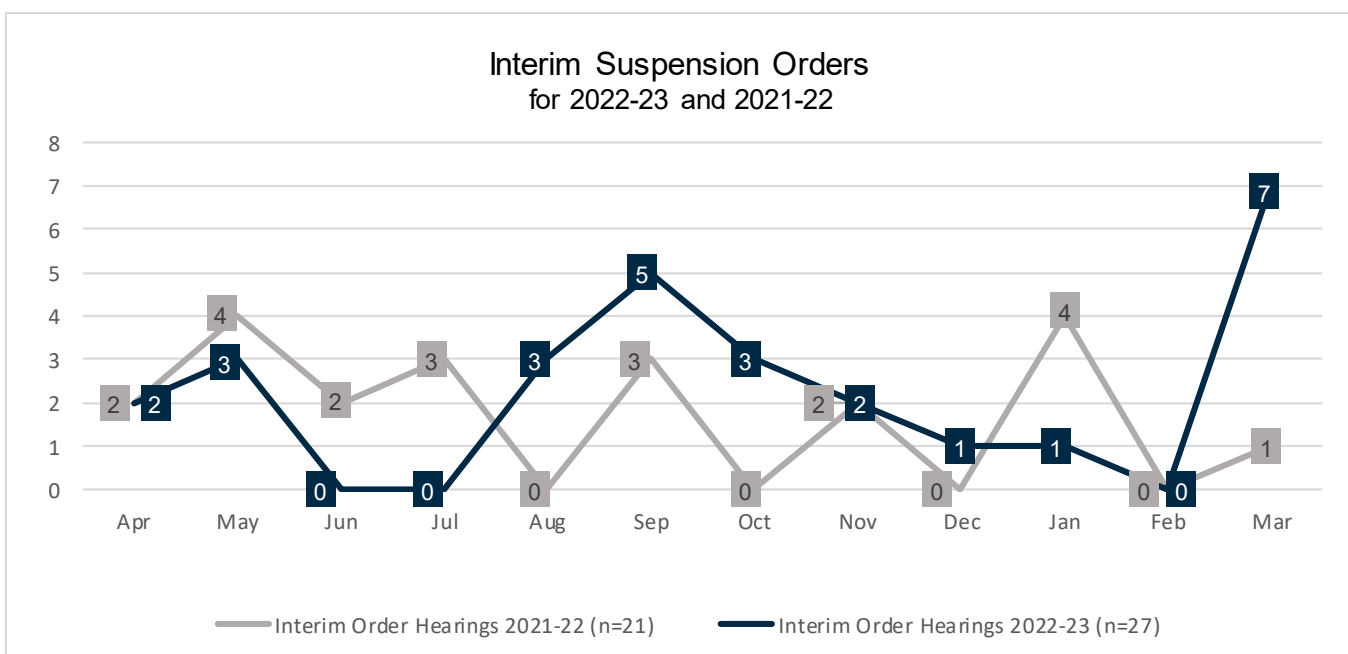


Cumulative KPI for 2022-23 was 95% of referrals triaged within three working days. Performance was strongest in Quarter 4, with 100% of referrals triaged within timescales. This performance for 2022-23 reflects the effective management of risk in triaging referrals in-year, despite considerable increase in referrals and the proportion of these requiring further investigations. 5% of referrals across 2022-23 were outside KPI, requiring 4-5 days to complete. Delay in triaging these 25 referrals did not create an additional risk to the public. Delays were as a result of time taken by those making the referrals to respond to initial enquiries and also staff availability.



**Performance analysis for 2022-23**

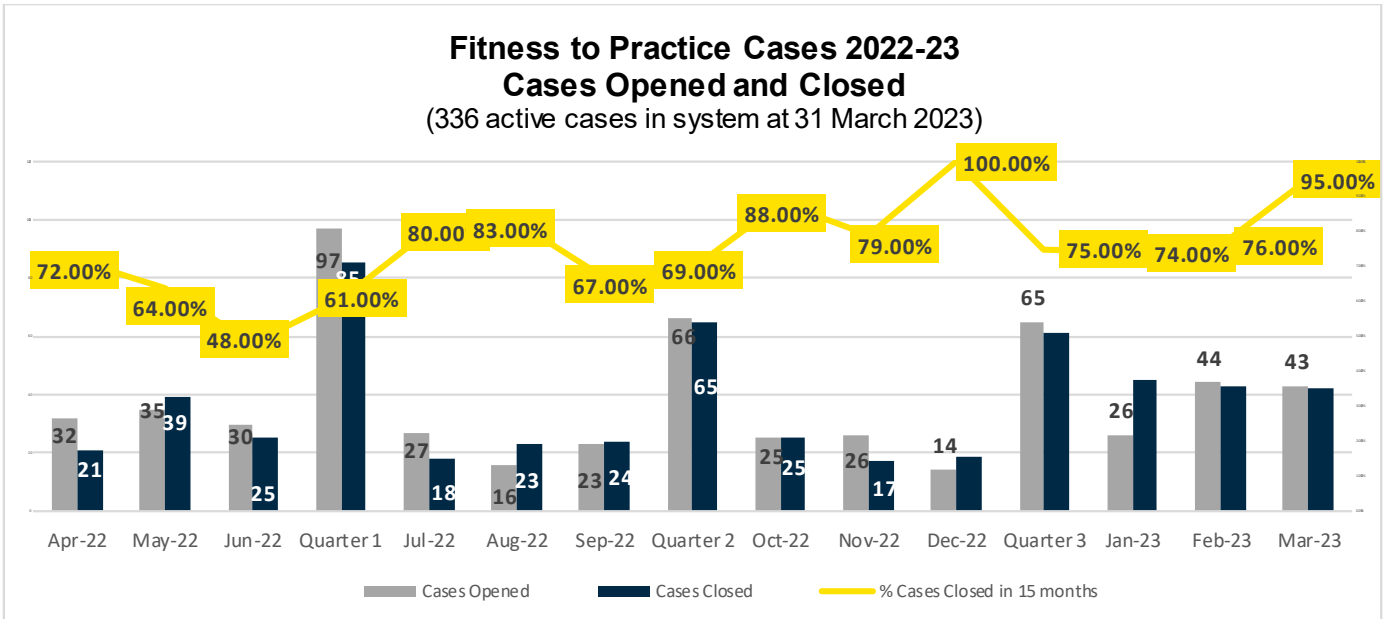
In circumstances where a concern about a registrant is assessed as high risk, the Fitness to Practise Team may apply for an Interim Suspension Order hearing which seeks to temporarily suspend a registered person from practising in their social work or social care role while further investigations are undertaken. This would occur in only a small number of referrals. 27 Interim Orders were applied in 2022-23, 25 of which were completed with the four-week KPI. Two Interim Orders took an additional week to complete. (21 Interim Orders were applied in 2021-22). The unpredictability of when ISOs will be required places additional pressures on Fitness to Practise and Committee teams. This was particularly evident in March 2023 when 7 ISOs were concluded. This was the highest monthly total in 2022-23. Achievement of KPI required careful allocation of resources to manage them effectively. There were 31 Interim Orders in place at 31 March 2023.



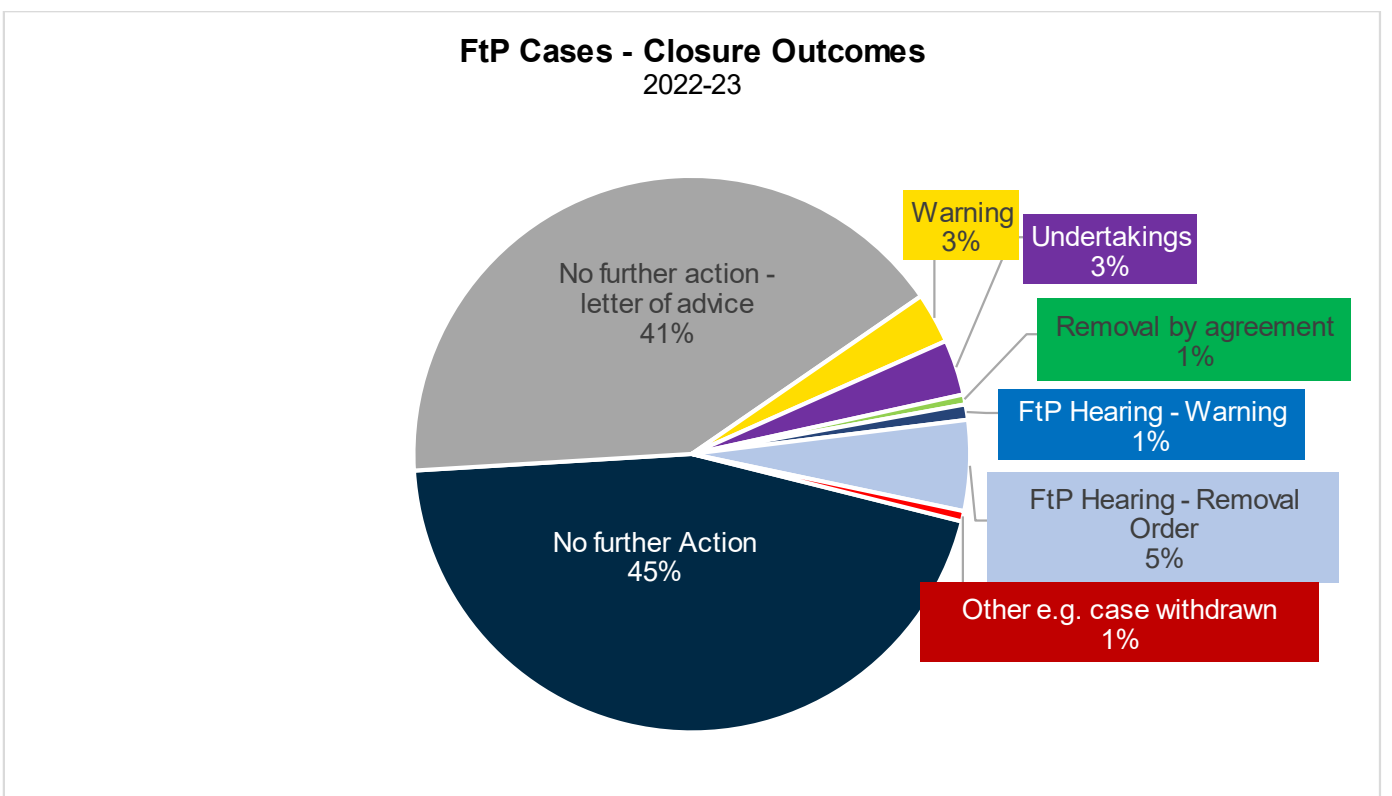
94% of Fitness to Practise cases were closed through consensual disposal in 2022-23. The Fitness to Practise Model of Regulation provides a wide range of disposal options including Consensual Disposals, ranging from letters of advice to warnings or undertakings to improve practice. 45% of consensual disposals were assessed as requiring 'no further action', 41% required a 'letter of advice about the Standards', 3% required a 'warning', 3% involved 'undertakings'. This approach supports engagement with the registrant to address less serious concerns and offers the opportunity to apply a proportionate and timely sanction that can support remediation and improvement in practice. It is important to highlight that all Consensual Disposal decisions are public facing and subjected to regular external audit to ensure openness and transparency.

341 cases were closed in 2022-23, which is a 10% increase on 2021-22. The KPI standard for closure of Fitness to Practise cases is for 90% to be closed within 15 months. 78% of cases closed in-year met the KPI Standard., which is an improvement on 2021-22 (73%) This KPI has been affected by long-running cases, which have taken between 16 and 48 months to conclude. At 31 March 2023, 336 active Fitness to Practise cases remained in the system, 25% of which were more than 15 months old. All cases are reviewed at monthly case conferences, including long-running cases. The impact of these long-running cases on KPI is kept under review by management. It remains the aim to attain the standard of closing 90% of cases within 15 months.

**Performance analysis for 2022-23**



140 cases were referred to Fitness to Practise Committees during 2022-23. Committees made 120 decisions involving registration applications, Interim Order applications and Fitness to Practise final orders. 27 Interim Order applications (21 in 2021-22). 30 Interim Order reviews were held, (48 held in 2021-22). In relation to the outcomes of 22 Fitness to Practise Hearings, 18 Removal Orders were applied and 3 Warnings. (1 case withdrawn, 1 adjourned, 1 part heard). All of these hearings were delivered remotely in the first half of the year. One hearing was held in-person in quarter 3.



### **Performance analysis for 2022-23**

18 new Committee Chairs and Members were appointed during 2022-23. The new Committee Member training programme was introduced, with the first sessions delivered in October 2022. Refresher training was provided for existing members and ongoing 360 assessments of Chairs and Committee Members were completed. The Committee Team delivered 69 Committee days in 2022-23, including 22 Fitness to Practise Hearings. 70 people were supported by the team to engage in proceedings by phone, email or in person. The Committee Team initiated a study to evaluate the methods used for delivery of Fitness to Practise Hearings and Committees to establish whether future delivery of these services should be online, in-person or a combination of formats as appropriate to the circumstances of each case. In March, surveys were issued to those involved in delivering hearings to gather feedback on their experiences of the various methods of service delivery. Feedback will be analysed during April/May. Testing of new equipment and software to support hearings and committees in James House is ongoing.

It is not yet certain whether the level of referrals and cases will settle at current levels. Additional funding was approved by the DoH in 2021-22 to increase the staffing resource for the Fitness to Practise Team and Committee function in response to the increasing volume of work and the more complex nature of the cases being referred. Recruitment was completed in 2022-23. The increase in Fitness to Practise Team outputs is evidencing the investment in staff recruitment and development during 2022-23. New staff have been mentored to develop their skills and specialist knowledge. The new manager is working closely with the Head of Service to review and improve processes to enhance the service. The implementation of the electronic case management system later in 2023 will also assist in improving case closure timescales.

### **Regulation – Social work education and training 2022-23**

The Social Care Council has a statutory responsibility to set standards for social work education and training at both qualifying and post qualifying levels. In 2022-23, there was extensive engagement with course providers, tutors, practice teachers and employers to ensure the continued delivery of Degree in Social Work teaching and practice learning as teaching readjusted to new arrangements post-pandemic. During the year, annual monitoring was completed for 3 Degree courses, 21 Designated Practice Learning Providers and 16 PiP Programmes. Initial assessments have confirmed the standards are being met. Follow up recommendations have been provided to support ongoing improvement. AYE Audits were completed for June 2022 sample of 24 newly qualified social workers. All were assessed as meeting the Social Care Council Standards.

We have worked closely with employers and the DoH to ensure the required supports are in place for new social workers as they commenced their first Assessed Year in Employment (AYE). Strategic and operational meetings have continued throughout the year to plan for the recruitment of new students to courses and to co-ordinate the teaching and practice learning for existing students. Following approval of the first Open University (OU) distance learning course for the Social Work Degree in NI in March 2020, support has been provided to ensure the course meets the required standards, with the third cohort of OU students in place for autumn 2022. 255 Newly qualified social workers graduated in Summer 2022. 292 students enrolled to start the Degree in Social Work in Autumn 2022.

### **Performance analysis for 2022-23**

The PiP Partnership met online during 2022-23 to review progress for the framework and to provide an expert view on issues affecting employers, educators and candidates. Work was completed in Quarter 2 to facilitate changing the PiP Quality Assurance cycle start date from April to September. This required completion of PiP Approved Programme Annual Monitoring for both 2020/21 and 2021/22 is almost complete. Providers were asked to provide information about changes made to programmes during COVID, with commentary about what changes will be retained in the longer term. The Standards of Conduct of Practice have also been built into the Professional Adviser assessment processes. A total of 16 programmes have been monitored with the majority requiring 2 years monitoring due the pause during COVID. Standardisation training for PiP Assessors was delivered in 2022-23. 33 people made submissions for the PiP Individual Assessment Route in March 2023. Assessment has been completed and the External Assessor report is due in May.

Joint approval and revalidation of Ulster University PIP Programmes (MSC Professional Development in Social Work) is due in 2023-34. Preparatory work was completed in Quarter 3 and 4. Revalidation panel dates are scheduled for April. A survey was sent to all those involved in UU programme approval to gather perspectives on the processes in place and identify what could be improved. Survey feedback will also be used as part of the revalidation process.

167 social workers received PiP Awards at the September 2022 online ceremony. The 2023 Awards are scheduled to make a welcome return as an in-person event in June, with an estimated 180 candidates due to receive awards. Recommendations from the review of PiP Credit Accumulation Route was approved by the PiP Partnership in 2022-23. Small working groups are being established to involve key stakeholders with this redesign which aims to increase engagement with this route for social worker PRTL requirements was agreed.

The Strategic Advisory Group for qualifying and post qualifying education and training in social work has met on a regular basis to ensure continued standards of the Degree and provision within the PiP Framework, and to approve modifications for contingency plans due to COVID. Collaboration across the Degree Partnership has ensured that all Degree programmes including Practice Learning are on track and PiP programmes delivered alongside sustained engagement with other assessment routes. All scheduled regulatory functions including approval, monitoring and quality assurance activity have been successfully delivered.

### **Regulation - The difference this made in 2022-23**

- 98% of registrants maintained their registration.
- Letters of Advice, Conditions of Practice Orders were used to enable registrants to improve their practice.
- Fitness to Practise Committee Members and Chairs participated in training sessions and '360' reviews to support consistency and quality in decision-making.
- 70 people were supported by telephone, email and online to enable them to contribute effectively in Committees and Hearings (registrants, employers, and witnesses).
- 100% of the workforce sampled for PRTL met the requirement of 90 hours CPD (December 2022 Audit point).
- 167 social workers attained PiP Awards (Summer 2022 assessment point).
- Audits of AYE assessments were completed to confirm standards of assessment for new social workers are consistent across employment sectors.

## Performance analysis for 2022-23

### Regulation - What we have learned in 2022-23

- We need to meet increasing demands on the registration and fitness to practise functions, which will require ongoing review of systems and application of ICT.
- We need to continue to review and develop the Degree in Social Work to ensure it will 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.

### Looking ahead - Indicators of success for Regulation in the 2023-24 Business Plan

- At least 80% of registrants understand and are able to maintain their registration using the registration ICT system.
- FTP hearings are held from January 2024 based on the findings from the review.
- Approval and Quality Assurance processes will be completed within agreed timescales.
- At least 50% of social care registrants report accessing the learning resources to support them in their practice.
- The model of regulation is evidence-based, reflects best practice and meets the needs of a modern workforce

## Strategic Theme 3 – Workforce Development

### Objectives for 2022-23 - We said we would

- Develop proposals for consultation on a system of revalidation to link PRTL requirements with the Professional in Practice Framework for the social work profession.
- Work in partnership with stakeholder organisations to deliver careers and recruitment campaigns for social work and social care.
- Develop a learning and improvement framework for social care workers which will support the development of a career structure.
- Develop our digital learning platform to provide registrants and employers with greater access to learning and employment resources.

Central to our workforce development activity is partnership working to develop education, training and learning to future-proof the workforce. All registrants are required to complete ongoing training and learning to support their registration. In the first half of 2022-23, COVID restricted the opportunity to deliver face-to-face training for the workforce and created a demand for a wider range of online learning resources to support induction and training. This support for workforce learning and development was delivered primarily through the Social Care Council Learning Zone.

The relaxation of restrictions on in-person activities during Quarter 4 enabled the workforce development team to reintroduce in-person events, seminars and working groups to engage stakeholders with the work of the Social Care Council. Online engagement continued as well, enabling a wide range of stakeholders to connect with the Social Care Council and their peers to share knowledge and best practice.

### **Performance analysis for 2022-23**

The calendar of school and employment careers events was reintroduced in Quarter 4. Also, social care organisations were able to invite the engagement officers back into social care workplaces to deliver information about registration, standards, learning and development for social work and social care. 2022-23 action plans for the Social Care Reform projects were implemented, with a strong focus on engagement activities designed to involve the sector on plans for development of: Career Pathway for Social Care; Continuous Learning Framework for Social Care; Qualifications Based Register; Research and Service Design; Digital learning resources; and collaboration with the Princes Trust 'Get into Social Care' programme to work with young entrants to the workforce.

Monthly online Lunchtime Seminars were hosted throughout the year. These events engage an average of 150 people in sharing learning and best practice around: CPD & Professional Growth, Cost of Living Crisis & Social Work, Family Voices in Decision Making, Working in partnership with the LGBTQIA+ population. 91% of participants reported positive experience on the quality of the presentations and discussions. Social Work Educators & Practice Assessors were brought together at the 'Digital in the Social Work Degree' workshop on developing digital capacity within social work and social work education.

Social Care ECHO network also hosted regularly monthly online events for Care at Home Managers and Supervisors in presentations, discussions and updates on emerging practice and issues affecting social care services. The Midway ECHO participant survey reported strongly positive views that the project objectives to cascade learning, share best practice and provide peer support were being met. Social Care Managers Forums were also held in Belfast and Omagh, bringing together managers across the sector to update them on the new resources available to support them in meeting their responsibilities for registered staff.

The engagement team delivered presentations at workplace events to share information about the Social Care Council, registration, standards, learning and development with social care workers and managers. Sessions were also delivered university students to introduce the AYE standards. The PiP Framework information was shared in workplaces as part of induction and CPD for social workers.

The Social Care Council Learning Zone was redeveloped during 2021-22 and the new platform was launched in October 2023. Engagement with the Learning Zone has remained strong, with 4.5-5k users engaged every month and 1170k people using the platform since it was first launched. The top 3 pages accessed on the site were PRTL, Why Learning Zone and PiP. Standards of Conduct and Practice, Dysphagia Awareness, AYE, Careers in Social Work and Making the Right Decisions attracted the most page views across all platforms. The Social Care Council has been accepted to present in a Thematic Panel Discussion on Enhancing workforce engagement with technology at the European Social Services Conference in June 2023. Development work continues in the review of the Child Development resources, updates to the Healthcare Library materials and developing a Reflective Practice resource for social care workers.

The Social Care Council is developing a toolkit which follows a similar approach to the existing Values-Based Recruitment resource which was designed for employers as best practice in recruitment. The resource is being developed to support employees and is based largely on the resources developed by the Scottish Social Services Council. Cedar Training were commissioned to write the resource content and have completed scoping for the content.

The DoH provided further funding to support the social care worker priority training which was delivered in 2021-22. Applications for training funding on behalf of 80 people working in social care were approved. £122,173 was allocated to support training on the Level 5 Diploma (Leadership & Management in Health and Social Care NI), Level 4 Certificate (Principles of Leadership & Management (Adult Care NI), and the Level 3 Diploma (Health and Social Care NI). The scheme also provides funding for a mentor to support the candidates on their leadership journey. Progress will be monitored across the next 12 months as the programmes are delivered.

Development work continues on the Career Pathway for Social Care. The Social Care Council reference group and Qualifications Development Panel members have been leading a project to research the content for an entry level Health & Safety Certificate qualification which could be recognised by social care employers across all sectors. Working groups have been established across the sector and the timeline and plans development of content for the certificate created. RQIA have been invited to participate so that the new certificate can be aligned with the RQIA standards and how they regulate these areas of practice. Work has also begun with the Further Education colleges to explore how this will link with the New Traineeship programme and make recommendations to colleagues in the Department of Economy.

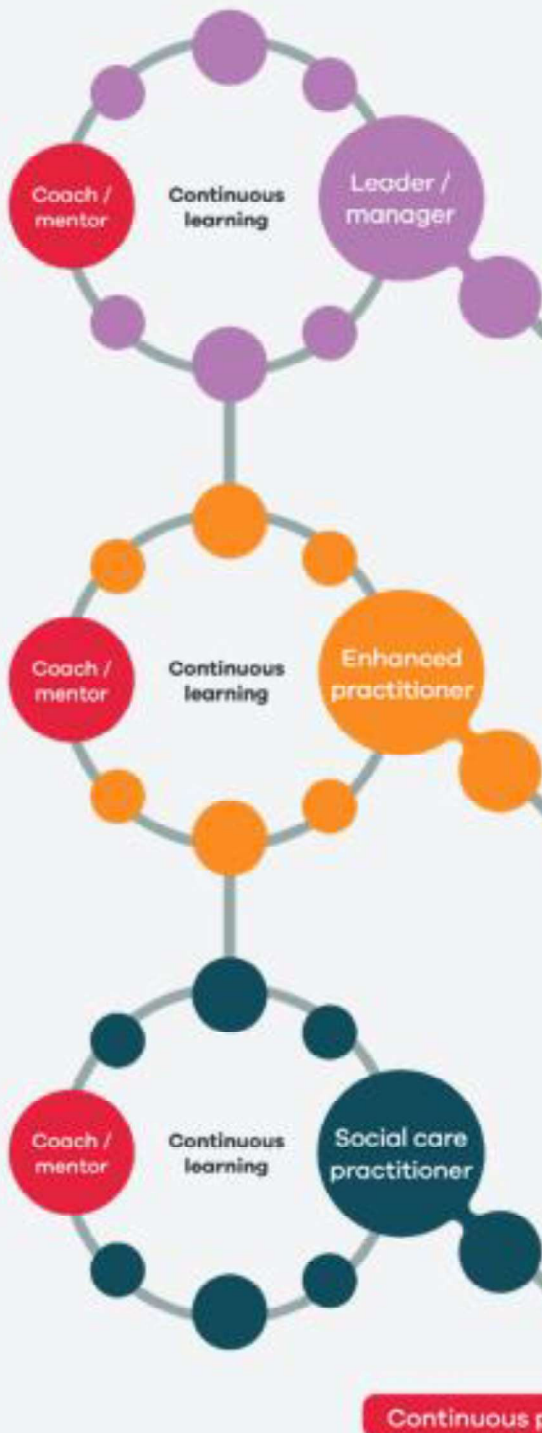
Front line social care staff have been engaged in a programme of interviews and focus groups, exploring their views and experiences of qualifications for social care, priorities relating to a qualifications-based register and a career pathway for social care. The first series of engagement has been completed and early feedback has been very insightful, including positive feedback on the prospect of an entry level certificate, but also sharing experience about lack of support in the workplace to complete such qualifications.

Princes Trust Commissioned Employability Programmes: The Social Care Council supported the Princes Trust to create and deliver Employability Programmes to attract support people into social care employment. Through Quarter 4, the team met with four social care organisations engaged in providing work experience for Princes Trust recruits. Material was developed for the social media campaigns promoting this employability programme. Support has been ongoing for this project as applicants move towards permanent employment, including contributing to 'Get hired with Health and Social Care' events where applicants are able to apply for jobs. Podcasts with employers and participants from the scheme are planned for April.

The Social Care Council is facilitating a local IMPACT project as part of the IMPACT UK – Local network for change in adult social care. The NI group is exploring ways of improving recruitment and retention within adult social care with a focus on 'values-based recruitment' between December 2022 and May 2023. Sessions to date have included discussions about values for social care workers and a presentation of the Social Care Council 'Values-Based Recruitment Toolkit' and the 'A Question of Care' resource. The group will also look at the Values Based Retention Toolkit during 2023-24.

# Care in Practice (CIP)

## Continuous professional learning framework (CPLF)



## Qualification career pathway

### Leadership and management

Level 6 and 7 management/MBA/ILM

Level 5 diploma in leadership and management health & social care:

- Adult management pathway.
- Adult residential.
- Management pathway.

### Enhanced

Level 4 certificate in principles of leadership and management in adult care

Level 4 diploma in adult health and social care

### Consolidation

Level 3 diploma in health & social care

### Entry

Level 2 diploma in health & social care

Level 2 certificate in induction

A thriving, resilient social care workforce continuously evolving to provide the best care and support to service users now and in the future.



## Performance analysis for 2022-23

### Workforce development – The difference this made in 2022-23

- Social care workers, social workers, managers and allied professionals have access to free, and up to date training and guidance to support safe and effective delivery of care.
- Accessible events, information sessions and seminars are connecting registrants and supporting them to share best practice.
- Social workers are being offered a growing range of opportunities to fulfil their CPD through the PiP Framework.
- Managers are supported to build networks and alliances with colleagues.
- Employers and educators are being connected to ensure qualifications and training courses meet the needs of the sector.
- Social care workers are provided with access to digital learning resources that support them to continuously learn and develop at a time and pace that suits them and to embed standards into their practice.
- Our collaborative approach with employers, registrants, social care educators and Awarding Bodies has been effective in supporting workforce learning and development throughout the pandemic.

### Workforce development - What we have learned in 2022-23

- We need to focus our resources on consolidating and promoting the Learning Zone so registrants are supported to continuously learn and embed standards into their practice.
- Engaging with registrants will help us to understand how we can best recognise their learning and development within the PiP framework.
- Establishment of a Learning Framework for Social Care and a recognised career structure would attract more people to the workforce.
- Continued support and promotion of promote domiciliary care training is key to upskilling of the workforce.
- Information and awareness sessions are needed to help build digital confidence and improve digital skills in the workforce.
- Virtual learning networks will support social care managers to share learning and develop innovative approaches to service delivery.

### Looking ahead - indicators of success for Workforce Development in the 2023-24 Business Plan

- The content of the Health and Safety certificate will be completed and approved by partners for use by new social care workers across the workforce.
- The redesign of the PiP credit accumulation route will be complete, based on stakeholder engagement and its successor launched for utilization by social workers
- Evidence of engagement with social work leaders to support the Social Work Leadership Framework.
- An increase in engagement in digital learning of 20%.

## Strategic Theme 4 – Systems Leadership

### Objectives for 2022-23 - We said we would

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

In recognising the value of collective leadership across the Health and Social Care system, as well within the regulatory system, we work with a range of networks of people who collaborate on development and improvement. Our work to connect social work and social care leaders is helping to shape social work and social care as health and social care transformation moves forward. Now, more than ever, insight from sector leaders is needed to inform strategic workforce planning and development. In January 2023, NICON and the Social Care Council jointly hosted a Rapid Action Workshop to identify possible solutions to the blockages in hospital discharge. Attendees included representatives from HSC Trusts, Independent Sector social care providers, Department of Health, Public Health Agency, and digital and system design organisations. A number of actions were agreed and arising out of the workshop the DoH undertook to work with the Social Care Council and NICON to establish a Social Care Collaborative Forum to deliver reform, address service pressures, promote co-ordinated activity and collaboration, and provide strategic oversight, direction and governance. The first meeting of the forum is scheduled for April, followed by sessions in May and June. Membership of the Forum is cross-sector and includes HSC Trusts, Independent sector umbrella bodies, DoH, PHA, SPPG, RQIA, NICON, the Social Care Council and service users and carers. The Social Care Council Chief Executive has been asked to co-Chair the Forum along with the Deputy Secretary, Social Care Policy (DoH).

We continue to support the strategic partnerships and networks for social work and social care. These networks comprise leaders from the statutory, voluntary, education and justice sectors. They are key in raising the profile of social work and social care in all sectors, and developing a collaborative approach on strategic issues impacting on the workforce. The Social Care Council hosted a workshop with social work leaders to explore the implementation of the Social Work Leadership Framework. The framework was developed by the DoH and has been given to the Social Care Council to lead its implementation. We are working in collaboration with the 5 HSC Trusts, and the Centre for Effective Services to develop an implementation plan.

Social Care Council staff have participated in a number of workshops led by the Children's Services Review. Senior staff have met with the DoH to discuss the options for children's services arising out of the review. The Social Care Council also supported a piece of research led by BASWNI into the core roles and tasks undertaken by children's social workers. The research was undertaken at the request of Professor Ray Jones who was interested on social workers' views of their core roles and tasks and what tasks could be considered in the context of a skills mix approach to children's services. In collaboration with the Education Authority, we hosted a workshop on social work in schools. The workshop included representatives from schools, the Education Authority, Department of Education and BASW.

### **Performance analysis for 2022-23**

During 2022-23, work continued towards building our skills and capacity to analyse the information we gather about our registered workforce and to share trends and knowledge with the DoH and our sector partners to help develop the workforce. Live information about the workforce is essential for the Social Care Council and our sector partners for forecasting and planning. A Database and Intelligence Officer was recruited to provide analysis of the information held by the organisation and also to identify gaps in the information we hold about our registrants. Further work was undertaken to scope the development of information published through PowerBi dashboards. Analysis was undertaken to review the Fitness to Practise Referrals received in 2012-22. This report compares referrals across job roles, sectors and by registrant demographics and will be finalised in Summer 2023. We will continue to invest in our capacity and capability to analyse and report on our workforce information in 2023-24. A report on the Social Care Register is planned for Autumn 2023 along with a State of the Nation report to comment on the workforce, their standards and their education and training.

Emerging technologies are key to transforming social work and social care service delivery to meet the changing needs of our communities. The Social Care Council is a member of the Digital Health and Care NI (DHCNI) project team to develop digital capability for health and social care in NI. DHCNI strategy focuses on enabling health and social care staff to have the right information in the right place at the right time to ensure effective, efficient and safe decision-making. It recognises that digital health can be a game-changer as it improves the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of care, allowing for new models in the delivery of services. The Social Care Council is providing insight into digital capabilities and attitudes towards the use of technology to inform the development of the Digital Capability Strategy and forthcoming Digital Capability Framework. Together with our digital partners, we are seeking to motivate and support a workforce that can confidently use digital health technologies to deliver health and social care.

The Social Care Council has worked with representatives from the HSC Trusts, Digital Health and Care NI, Probation Board, Business Services Organisation and the Department of Health to scope out an option to map social care workforce data to assist with workforce planning. The Data Intelligence workstream for social work held the first in a series of workshops in March 2023 which focused on user needs and data sources.

Staff have contributed to project boards and initiatives to ensure social work and social care is reflected in strategic development within and outside the HSC system, including: the Social Work Workforce Review project group and Implementation Board, the Reform of Adult Social Care Project Board, the NI Joint Regulators Forum and the NI Regional Ethics Forum. We met regularly and held joint events with RQIA, the regulator for Health and Social Care services. Engagement with DoH and CORU, the social work regulator in Ireland, continued to agree arrangements for the regulation of social workers post Brexit. Regular meetings with regulatory and workforce skills partners in the UK and Ireland continued to ensure learning was shared to support standards in regulatory and workforce practice, including participation in Social Work England's Decision Review Group.

**Performance analysis for 2022-23**

**Systems Leadership – The difference this made in 2022-23**


- 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.
- The impact of Brexit on mobility, recruitment and retention for the social work and social care workforce is reflected in DoH planning and policy development.
- Contributed our unique knowledge of the registered workforce to local, national and international contacts to promote best practice and innovation.
- Shared knowledge and best practice with UK and EU regulators to promote consistency in standards of education, training and practice.
- Provided contributions and support for strategic meetings and networks.

**Systems Leadership - What we have learned in 2022-23**

- The Social Care Council's workforce intelligence reports inform stakeholders about the trends in the social work and social care workforce.
- The Social Care Council has provided a range of opportunities for registrants, service users and carers, social care providers and other stakeholders to connect and share learning, helping to build relationships across the sector.
- The Social Care Council continues to develop its skills and resource as a systems leader for the social care workforce and wider sector.

**Looking ahead - Indicators of success for Systems Leadership in the 2023-24 Business Plan**

- Publish analysis of the Social Care Register and a State of the Nation Report by August 2023 and share with key stakeholders and the sector.
- Contribution to HSC data sets and reporting to share with leaders.
- The programme of work for the Leaders in Social Care Partnership for 2023-24 is delivered.
- Actions identified by the Social Care Collaborative Forum are delivered during 2023-24 with progress being made.
- Engagement with regulators and RQIA to share information in a way that supports safe and effective care.

 Northern Ireland Social Care Council 2022-23 May 2  
Data, data, data! We were proud to host a recent workshop on [#socialwork](#) workforce [#evidence](#) [#data](#) and [#intelligence](#) to progress work from the Social Work Workforce Review. Opening [@AineMorrison](#) focused on understanding workforce issues/data to better support the [@HSC\\_NI](#).



## Strategic Theme 5 – Communications and Engagement

### Objectives for 2022-23 - We said we would

- Deliver on our Communications and Engagement Plan for 2022-23 to build an understanding of the role and purpose of the Social Care Council.
- Deliver our Communication and Engagement Plan for 2022-23 to engage the profession and raise the profile of social Workers.
- Deliver our Communication and Engagement Plan for 2022-23 to support the transformation and development of the social care workforce.

Since our establishment in 2001, communication and engagement with our registrants and stakeholders has remained a key theme, recognising that to deliver our statutory functions we need to effectively connect with our registrants and stakeholders to successfully deliver our business. To support the outcomes set out in the current Corporate Plan, we have invested in the promotion of social work and social care, developing our social media presence and creating engagement forums for leaders, managers and front-line registrants to strengthen our connections with the sector.

In the first half of 2022-23, our focus remained on developing our digital communications to compensate for the restrictions placed on our capacity to deliver on face-to-face engagement. As the number of online events increased, the team developed presentations and promotional materials to attract participants and to support event delivery. The team delivered a series of campaigns across the digital platforms to support projects and initiatives on behalf of the Social Care Council and partner organisations using email marketing, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn and our website. Recognising that the workforce was under pressure during the pandemic, campaigns were co-ordinated to ensure key messages were delivered to the target groups in proportionate volumes and at optimum times. We took time to develop quality artwork, images and videos that would attract and engage our stakeholders with the Social Care Council brand and message. This integrated approach has been particularly effective when using Email campaigns together with social media (especially Twitter).

Communications activities were delivered to support and promote the Social Care Council's engagement and registrant support including: Lunchtime Seminar series, Learning Zone, Social Care ECHO, the Professional in Practice Framework and resources for newly qualified social workers. Organisational communications included the promotion of the consultation on the Social Care Council's Strategic Plan, 21st anniversary year posts, Princes Trust – Get into Social care pilot and continued sharing of the Review of Children's Services survey for social workers in partnership with BASWNI. Support was provided for the planning and roll out of communications activity to support the Social Care Council's location move to James House in February 2023. Videos, artwork and news stories were prepared to support the virtual Participation Partnership 'In Our Shoes' event, aimed at attracting newcomer service users and carers to the Partnership.

Development of the 2022-23 social care campaign continued, including progressing revisit videos from the 2021-22 social care studies participants, a photography project to commenced to complement the campaign, and with plans for an overall campaign plan to kick off late spring.

**Performance analysis for 2022-23**

The DoH Social Work Careers campaign was refreshed for radio and online promotion in Autumn-Winter 2022 to coincide with the UCAS application timetable. External campaigns progressed well for our social work promotional campaigns for March 2023 to recognise a *special month of reflection and World Social Work Day*. This included social media digital promotion, stakeholder engagement, outreach to our social work networks, attendance at sector events and the release of a new social work reflections video series. social media and website promotion.

An evaluation of the 2022-23 Social Work Degree promotional campaign measured the impact of outreach to schools, collating benchmark data for click through rates for new platforms like Spotify to help understand and predict performance for future campaigns. Website analytics showed a peak before December in terms of visit to the Degree in Social Work webpage, with a strong showing of engagement, with those who visited the page on average staying on it for almost three minutes. This demonstrates that they found the information engaging and useful.

The Social Care Council website www.niscc.info was updated regularly to provide news and links to resources for our stakeholders. On average 30k people visit the website every month. The website, Learning Zone and Online Registration Portal all offer Browsealoud software, supporting 8-10k people with tools for translation, visual aids and audio assistance.

**Communications and Engagement Team Dashboard March 2023**

Date	Subject	Recipients	Opens	Clicks
01 March	ECHO 16 March (cancelled)	807	194	4
01 March	Participation Partnership - In Your Shoes Virtual Event (employers)	313	101	4
02 March	Core Social Work Roles Survey Research Findings	6,368	2,448	572

**Communications and Engagement Team Dashboard March 2023**

Date	Subject	Recipients	Opens	Clicks
29 March	Booking a sign language interpreter for HSC appointments	34,297	12,570	89
29 March	Booking a sign language interpreter for HSC appointments - SW	6,952	1,869	30
29 March	ECHO 05 April	436	117	9
31 March	The Social Work Graduate Employment and Wellbeing Survey (Time 23s now live)	235	123	2

The dashboard also includes a calendar for March 2023 with a 'FINAL CALL' for COVID-19 boosters on 31 March 2023.

## Communication and Engagement – The difference this made in 2022-23

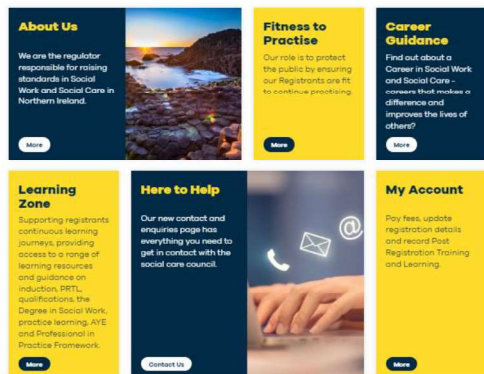
- Campaigns raised awareness of social care as a front-line service.
- Public health projects and initiatives were promoted to target groups.
- Careers in social work and social care were placed in high profile channels
- Education and training for social work and social care was promoted and achievements recognised.
- Stakeholders were kept informed about changes to the Social Care Council location and services.

## Communication and Engagement - What we have learned in 2022-23

- A communication and engagement strategy will support and co-ordinate our key efforts and messages communications must be clear and easy to understand.
- People who use services and their carers involvement in our work must be evidenced and the outcomes shared with other stakeholders.
- Online resources are essential in reaching such a large and disparate stakeholder group.
- Improving public perception is a long-term outcome.
- More work is required to solidify communication and engagement with our immediate stakeholders – registrants, employers, people who use services and their carers.

## Looking ahead - Indicators of success for Communications and Engagement in the 2023-24 Business Plan

- Stakeholder engagement strategy is in place and informing business.
- Communication planner in place and informing business.
- Intranet is overhauled and staff satisfaction levels increase by 20%.
- Registrant engagement strategy in place supporting meaningful engagement.
- Awareness of the Social Care Council role and function increases by 20%.



**Performance analysis for 2022-23**

## **Infrastructure and Leadership**

### **Objectives for 2022-23 - We said we would**

- **People** - Deliver the actions identified for 2021-22 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 2021-22 as set out in the Annual Quality Action Plan.
- **Systems** - Deliver our 2021-22 ICT Improvement Plan to further enhance the user experience of our registration and regulation system.

**Service Delivery** - Infrastructure is about the people, systems and processes that guide and deliver our work. Our objectives in relation to promoting a healthy workplace, developing staff, improving quality and managing our finances were successfully achieved. The Social Care Council has completed the transition back from full-time remote working which was in place during the pandemic. Staff are now able to work in groups within the office space without restrictions. Larger meetings/events have resumed with external stakeholders in the office and at other venues. Engagement activity to promote social work and social care careers, CPD, registration and the Standards has also restarted. Staff have been able to travel to meet with regulatory and workforce development colleagues in the UK, Ireland and Europe as part of the programme of work to share best practice and implement policy.

**Resources** - After 21 years based in Millennium House, the Social Care Council relocated to new premises in James House as part of the Belfast Optimisation Project. Staff, Board members, key stakeholders and contractors were involved in the preparations for the move. This included plans to co-ordinate the decant from Millennium House. All files, equipment, furniture and stocks were reviewed and those materials which were not required for James House were archived or safely disposed of. The tenancy at Millennium House ended on 28 February 2023.

**People** - All staff came together in James House on 6 February 2023 for a Townhall event to mark the first day in the new office. This was followed up with a series of 'team days' for staff groups to familiarise themselves with the office layout, the booking system for rooms and desks, and to test out the new workspaces. At the end of March, most of the 'moving in' was completed, with minor works in progress to set up interactive screens, video conferencing equipment and seating in the work pods. James House is proving to be a light, bright and positive environment for staff to work in, collaborate and reconnect.

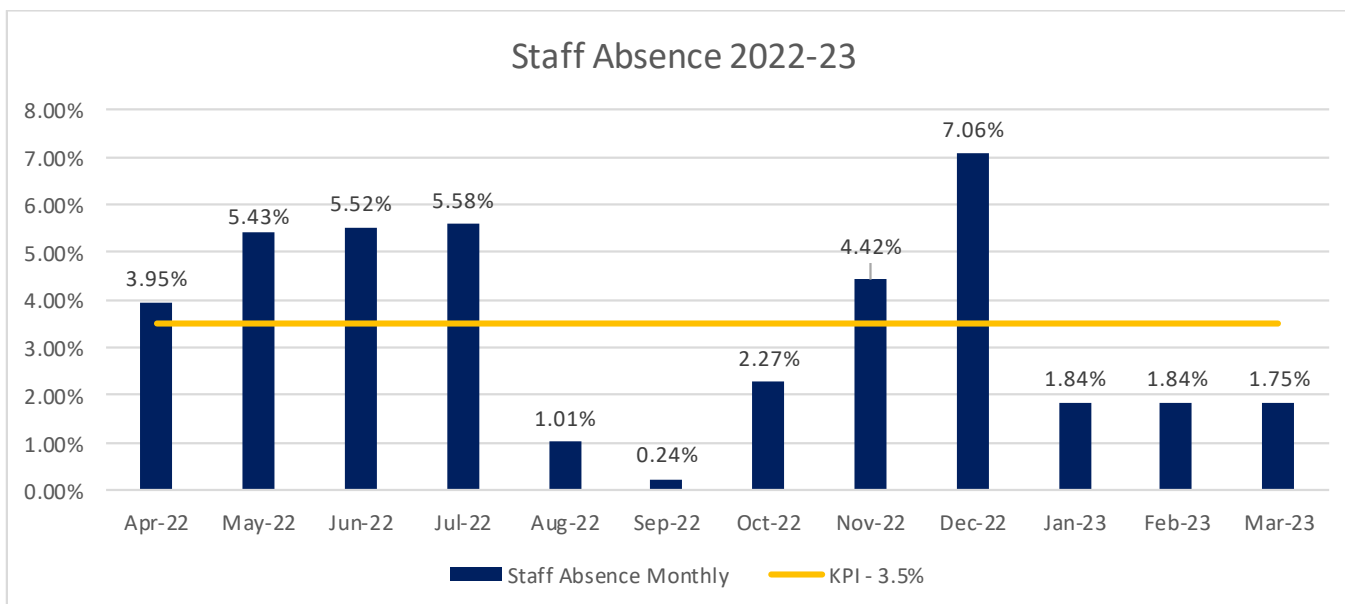


**Performance analysis for 2022-23**

The Social Care Council is an IIP (Gold) accredited employer and also attained the IIP Health and Wellbeing Award Gold Standard during 2022-23. 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 Chief Executive, has worked with staff to ensure the staffing resource is deployed to support business priorities. During the year, staff participated in the pulse surveys, mostly focused on their experiences of agile working as part of the transition away from full-time remote working. The outcomes from the survey were very positive with good and strong indicators throughout. The survey reflected the positive culture of the organisation and its leadership and enabled the development of the organisation’s Agile Working Policy.

**Health and Wellbeing** - Support for staff wellbeing and development remains a priority for managers and team leaders. A combination of online and in-person team meetings, check-ins and informal breaks have supported staff during the significant changes to working practices during the year. All staff members have opted in to the new Agile Working Policy and are using this innovative approach to manage their work pattern between the office space and remote locations, including home. SLT were onsite daily January through to March, listening and responding to all questions, suggestions and concerns. Welcome packs were prepared for staff to guide them on the practical arrangements for the new office and also to signpost them to additional services now available within the new site such as cycle parking and staff showers. The Health and Wellbeing Committee shared links to support services and details of local events to support wellbeing such as the lunchtime walking tours and Sustrans promotional events.

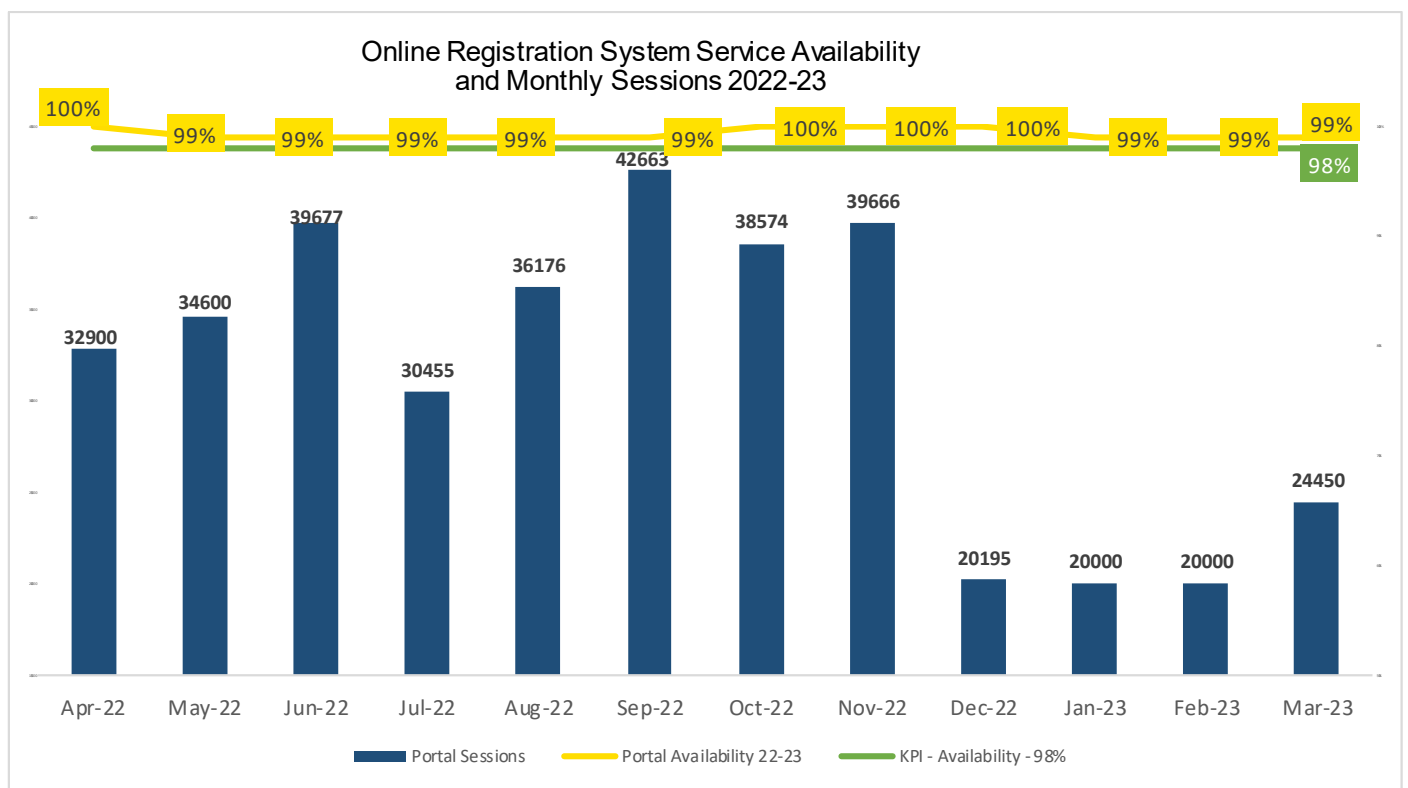
Staff absence totals for 2022-23 were 3.41% - which is below the overall KPI of 3.5%. Up to the end of month 7, staff absence had remained low in comparison to absences across the HSC. COVID and seasonal illnesses had affected all staff groups during November and December, with a spike of 7.06% in December. Absence reduced significantly in Quarter 4.



**Performance analysis for 2022-23**

**Planning** – The HSC Leadership Centre presented an update to the management team in March 2023 on a draft People Plan for the Social Care Council that will support succession planning, career development and recruitment and retention. A series of meetings is scheduled for BSO team to meet with individual managers from the Social Care Council during April to gather their information about existing opportunities and requirements in areas such as: Professional Qualifications, Leadership and Management development. This work be developed further with HR and the Leadership Centre in the April/May before being presented to all staff.

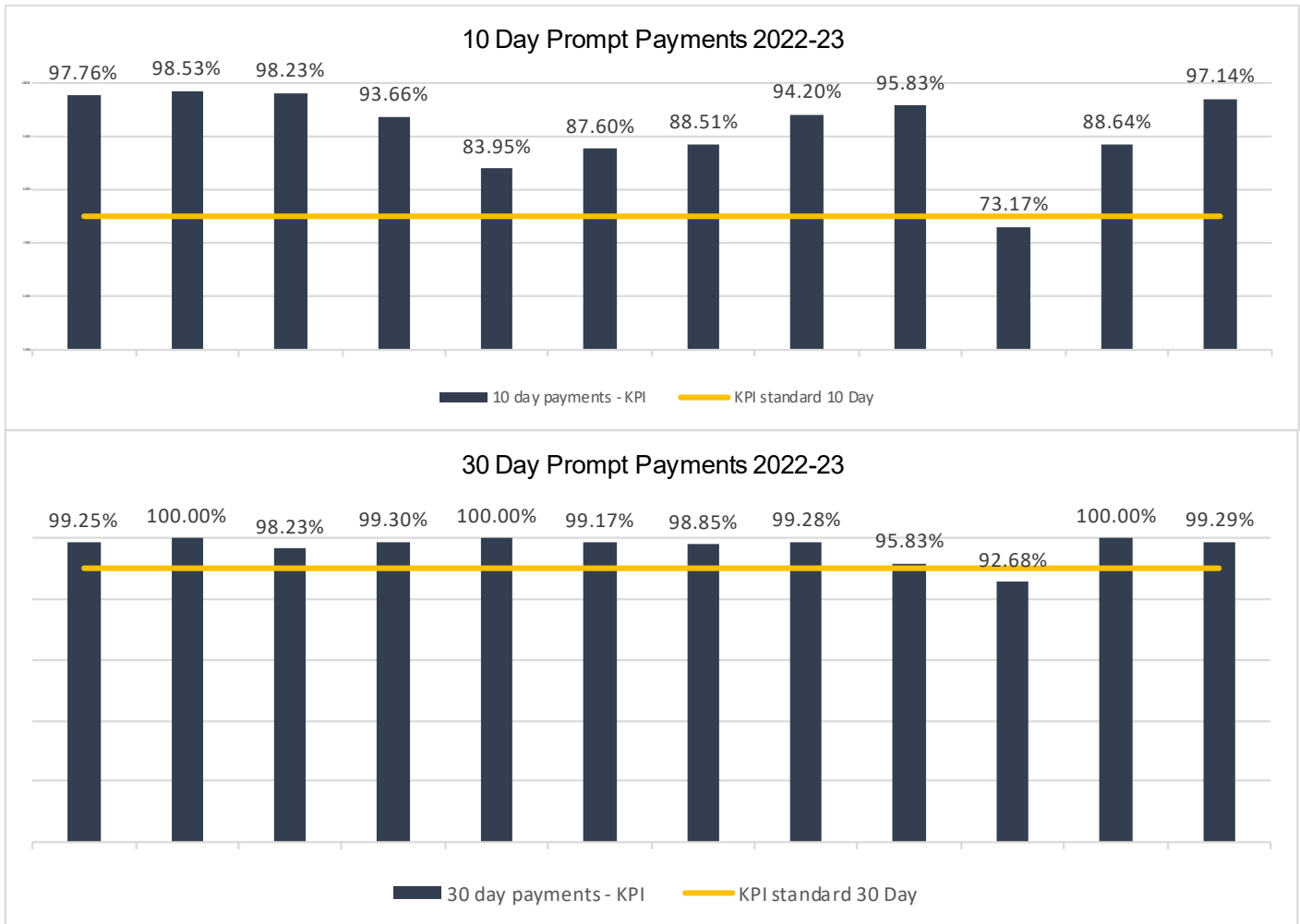
**Technology** – All staff were supplied with ICT devices to support them in agile working. The new premises at James House offer a range of shared and collaborative spaces to work from, with staff pre-booking desks and areas through a mobile application. The new premises are equipped with video conferencing technology to facilitate online and hybrid meetings. All staff have now transferred across to Windows10 and are using MS Teams for calls, meetings and messaging.



The online registration system achieved 99% availability throughout 2022-23, meeting the KPI of 98% availability. Development and testing work for the upgrade of the registration database was completed in Quarter 4. The system will upgrade to Microsoft CRM365 in May 2023. Training for staff is scheduled for April. Development work is also underway to develop a mobile application to make registration services more accessible for registrants. A User survey asking about use of mobile applications was issued to all registrants in March and feedback will be analysed as part of exploratory work in April/May.

**Performance analysis for 2022-23**

**Finance** – The Social Care Council Month 12 finance reports indicate a £9,737 underspend at 31 March 2023. The breakeven position target has therefore been reached for the financial year 2022-23. Full details of income and expenditure is included on page 90 of the accounts. Income received includes £1,459,391 from Registration Fees and £4,095,858 Revenue Resource Limit received from the Department of Health. Total expenditure of £5,723,616 was made up of £3,159,842 Pay related costs and £2,563,774 Non-Pay costs. Prompt payment targets for 10-day and 30-day payments were achieved.



**Equality and Diversity** - The Social Care Council is committed to promoting equality and diversity; providing the systems and culture to meet the duties set out within Section 75 of the Equality Act. The Social Care Council developed and delivered the annual Equality Action Plan and annual Disability Action Plan for 2022-23, in addition to a broad range of equality founded policies and procedures. (The Equality Scheme is reviewed every five years). The Equality Unit in the Business Services Organisation provided guidance and expertise on delivering on Equality Action Plans and supported statutory reporting to the Equality Commission. The Equality Unit is assisting the Social Care Council with the requirements of the review of Disability and Equality Plans. Consultation events are scheduled for Spring 2023. Details of what the organisation has done to deliver its equality, diversity, disability, human rights and good relations actions are set out in the Annual Equality Progress Reports which can be found on our website at [www.niscc.info](http://www.niscc.info).

### **Performance analysis for 2022-23**

#### **Infrastructure – The difference this made in 2022-23**

- Staff were supported staff to manage their health and wellbeing.
- Internal communications strengthened and staff connection with the business objectives improved through quarterly staff business events.
- Resources were managed to ensure services could be delivered effectively.
- Business was delivered in line with legislation and Good Governance guidelines.
- ICT Improvement Plan was delivered to further enhance the user experience of our registration and regulation system.
- Quality 2020 reporting confirmed met our obligations to provide equal opportunities and fair treatment for all staff and stakeholders.

#### **What we have learned in 2022-23**

- A QI approach to reviewing specific business functions/activities can lead to positive change and improvements.
- The system to support staff and managers in managing absences is fit for purpose.
- It is important to use a range of methods to engage and involve staff in delivery of the business.
- Health and wellbeing activities are having a positive impact on our staff, board and partners.

#### **Looking Ahead -**

#### **We have set the following indicators of success for infrastructure and leadership in the 2023-24 Business Plan**

- Social Care Council is placed to retain its IIP Gold status.
- Social Care Council has the right skills, structure and resources to support it over the next four years.
- Business Plan for 2023-24 is successfully delivered and the Social Care Council achieves its break even target at the end of the financial year.
- The Board receives assurance through audit and governance reports that the Social Care Council is delivering safe and effective governance.
- Staff are supported to engage in quality improvement activity within their own business area and as part of projects working across the organisation.
- Registrants, employers and others have access to an app, digital identity, online Portal and fully enabled IT to engage with us on their mobile phones and other devices.

## Performance Analysis for 2022-23

### 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 participated in the Belfast Optimisation Project, moving to James House in February 2023 alongside a number of other ALBs and organisations.
- Agile working is now in place with staff working a combination of at home and office-based. 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 now uses the Decision Time platform for publication of papers.
- 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. Following the organisation's move to new premises at James House, the Social Care Council is reviewing how it can develop actions and measure to support a Climate Action Plan. This work will be completed during 2023-24.

## Performance analysis – Key performance indicators

The organisation delivered its business during 2022-23 through remote and agile working – benefiting from remote and office-based working. The Senior Leadership Team, supported by Heads of Functions, continued to meet weekly throughout the year to review business priorities and share learning.

The 2022-23 Business Plan was delivered against 26 objectives and 12 KPIs. Progress against the annual Business Plan objectives 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.

The Senior Leadership Team is satisfied that delivery of the 26 objectives and performance against the 12 KPIs set out in the 2022-23 Business Plan meet the standards required to confirm achievement of year end outcomes in line with the 2017-21 Corporate Plan despite the challenges of delivering our services through remote and then agile working arrangements.

### At the end of Quarter 4/Month 12 (31 March 2023):

- 10 KPIs were rated **GREEN**
- 2 KPIs were rated **AMBER** (registration processing and conclusion of Fitness to Practise cases at 15 months). Further detail is provided overleaf.

KPI Overview at 31 March 2023

KPI	Performance	Comment on any highlights/risks/mitigation
<p><b>1. Customer experience – 85% of those using our services, report a positive experience</b></p>	<p><b>Cum 93%</b> Number of Survey responses (n=1063)</p>	<p><b>Across months 1-12 of 2022-23</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>59,291</b> people supported by Registration Advisers</li> <li>• <b>93%</b> positive experience reported (rolling customer survey - 1063 responses)</li> <li>• <b>24,235</b> calls handled (60% of calls presented were handled)</li> <li>• <b>35,056</b> emails managed (269 emails awaiting resolution at closing)</li> </ul> <p><b>GREEN rating for 93% cumulative KPI</b> reflects positive experiences reported by those supported through the services. It is recognized that the survey responses represent 2% of customers. Further work will be done in 2023-24 to promote the survey more widely.</p>
<p><b>KPI</b></p> <p><b>2. We will process 100% of completed applications/renewals within 20 working days of submission</b></p>	<p><b>Performance</b></p> <p><b>Cum 88%</b> Number of applications/renewals completed (n=19,962)</p>	<p><b>Comment on any highlights/risks/mitigation</b></p> <p><b>Across months 1-12 of 2022-23</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>19,962</b> registrations completed (<b>14,656</b> applications and <b>5,306</b> renewals)</li> <li>• <b>88%</b> of applications/renewals processed within 20 days of completed materials being received (<b>1,887</b> applications in the system at closing)</li> <li>• <b>95%</b> of renewals processed automatically through the online system</li> <li>• <b>45,691</b> fees paid (86% paid online)</li> </ul> <p><b>AMBER rating for 88% cumulative KPI</b> reflects strong performance in Quarter 4 after significant pressures on staff resource to progress applications processing in months 1-9, with 12% of completed applications taking more than 20 days to process. Management activities to recruit and develop staff and to involve staff in improving work processes improved performance in months 10-12. Team leader and staff development work will continue into 2023-23. Service improvements are also anticipated following the May 2023 system upgrade and development of the new Registration App.</p>

KPI	Performance	Comment on any highlights/risks/mitigation
<p><b>3.</b> We will update the register for all Fitness to Practise decisions within 2 working days of receipt of the information</p>	<p><b>Cum 100%</b> Number of registration records updated (n=101)</p>	<p><b>Across months 1-12 of 2022-23</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>101</b> registrant records were updated to reflect decisions made by Fitness to Practise Officers and Committees.</li> <li>• <b>100%</b> of updates were completed within the 2-day timescale.</li> </ul> <p><b>GREEN rating for 100% cumulative KPI</b> reflects the benefit achieved from training that was completed in 2021-22 to increase capacity within the team to amend registration records with fitness to practise and committee decisions.</p> <p>The chart below tracks case closure volumes against registration amendments for the year. The chart shows that there can be significant variations at times in the proportion of cases closed that require an amendment to a registration record. This illustrates how the decision reached in each case can be affected by a number of factors, including: seriousness of the allegation, mitigation presented, level of impairment, impact on others, or whether the alleged poor standards were proven.</p>
<p><b>4.</b> We will triage all referrals to the Fitness to Practise Team within 3 working days (referrals are assessed against the Social Care Council 'Standard for Acceptance')</p>	<p><b>Cum 95%</b> Number of concerns referred to fitness practice and triaged (n=493)</p>	<p><b>Across months 1-12 of 2022-23</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>493</b> concerns referred about a registrant's fitness to practise were triaged</li> <li>• <b>15%</b> of referrals were screened out at triage because they did not meet the standard, or were not within the remit of the Social Care Council</li> <li>• <b>16%</b> of referrals were screened out following provisional enquiries</li> <li>• <b>69%</b> of referrals resulted in investigation as a fitness to practise case</li> <li>• <b>15%</b> increase in referrals compared to 2021-22 and 7% increase in the proportion of referrals which resulted in a case for investigation</li> </ul> <p><b>GREEN rating for 95% cumulative KPI</b> reflects strong performance in Quarter 4 and the effective management of risk in triaging referrals in-year, despite considerable increase in referrals and the proportion of these requiring further investigations. 5% of referrals across 2022-23 were outside KPI, requiring 4-5 days to complete. Delay in triaging these 25 referrals did not create an additional risk to the public. Delays were as a result of time taken by those making the referrals to respond to initial enquiries and also staff availability. Current activity levels indicate a return to referral numbers of 30-35 for April 2023.</p>



KPI	Performance	Comment on any highlights/risks/mitigation
<p>5. We will conclude <b>100%</b> of Interim Suspension Order (ISO) hearings within 4 weeks of referral</p>	<p>Cum <b>93%</b> (n=27)</p>	<p><b>Across months 1-12 of 2022-23</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>27</b> cases were identified as high risk and referred for Interim Order hearing</li> <li>• <b>93%</b> (25 out of 27) of Interim Orders were concluded within 4 weeks of referral</li> <li>• <b>22%</b> increase in Interim Order cases compared to 2021-22</li> </ul> <p><b>GREEN rating for 93% cumulative KPI</b> reflects the agility of the FtP Officers and the Committee Management Team to implement processes respond within time constraints. 25 out of 27 ISO cases were concluded within KPI. One case concluded in May and one in October each took an additional week to complete. The small number of ISO cases concluded mean the additional time to close these two cases creates a disproportionate impact on KPI performance. There was no additional risk to the public as a result of these delays. The chart below shows the unpredictable nature of Interim Order cases. The system was robust enough to respond to within tight timescales to ensure registrants identified as posing a high risk to those receiving social care services were temporarily prevented from practising whilst investigations proceeded.</p>
<p>6. We will conclude <b>90%</b> of Fitness to Practise cases within 15 months of opening the case</p>	<p>Cum <b>78%</b> (n=341)</p>	<p><b>Across months 1-12 of 2022-23</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>341</b> Fitness to Practise cases concluded (336 active cases in the system at closing)</li> <li>• <b>94%</b> of cases resolved by FtP Officers through Consensual Disposal (154 no further action, 141 letters of advice about standards, 10 warnings, 11 undertakings. 2 removals by agreement</li> <li>• <b>16%</b> of cases decided by FtP Hearing Committee (18 removal orders, 3 warnings)</li> </ul> <p><b>AMBER rating for 78% cumulative KPI</b> reflects the strong response in managing 10% more case closures than 2021-22 year. Performance on closure times, particularly evident in Q1, was due to delays arising from criminal proceedings, safeguarding investigations, employer investigations, health assessments and wider delays resulting from COVID-19, as well as staff resource. Witness/employer co-operation was also a factor. Quarter 4 showed significant level of case closures, a number of which were long running cases aged from 16-43 months. All cases are reviewed at monthly case conferences, including long-running cases. 25% of active cases in the system at closing were older than 15 months. The impact of these long-running cases on KPI is kept under review by management. It remains the aim of management to attain the standard of closing 90% of cases within 15 months.</p>

KPI	Performance	Comment on any highlights/risks/mitigation
<p>7. We will complete <b>100%</b> of Quality Assurance processes for social work education and training within timeframes agreed with providers and identify recommendations for improvement</p>	<p><b>Cum 100%</b></p>	<p><b>Across months 1-12 of 2022-23</b> The programme of monitoring, review and inspection for social work education and practice learning was delivered for 2022-23. Responses from providers at qualifying and post qualifying levels provided assurance that the Social Care Council standards were being met.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>3</b> Degree in Social Work Approved Courses monitored</li> <li>• <b>21</b> Designated Practice Learning Providers monitored</li> <li>• <b>24</b> AYE Audit responses reviewed in 2022 sample and all candidates met the required standards</li> <li>• <b>16</b> PIP Approved Programmes monitored</li> <li>• Preparation for Ulster University PIP Programmes Re-Approval Mar-May 2023</li> <li>• <b>255</b> Degree in Social Work graduates in NI (summer 2022)</li> <li>• <b>292</b> students enrolled on the Degree in Autumn 2022 (including 8 Open University)</li> <li>• <b>167</b> PIP Awards presented in autumn 2022</li> <li>• <b>32</b> submissions received for PIP IAR assessment (March 2023)</li> </ul> <p><b>GREEN rating for 100% cumulative KPI</b> reflects the engagement that has been sustained with course management boards, PIP Partnership, Degree in Social Work Partnership and with employer leads for AYE and PIP to ensure programmes are supported in regular review of teaching to adapt to changing service requirements.</p>
<p>8. We will ensure our staff absence levels do not exceed <b>3.5%</b> during the year</p>	<p><b>Month 12 Cum 3.41%</b></p>	<p><b>Cumulative absence across months 1-12 was recorded at 3.41%.</b></p> <p>Up to the end of month 7, staff absence had remained low in comparison to absences across the HSC. COVID and seasonal illnesses had affected all staff groups during November and December, with a spike of 7.06% in December. Absence reduced significantly in January with 1.84% recorded and levels remained similar for February and March.</p> <p>*Since October 2022, COVID related absences have been recorded as sickness absence (rather than Public Sector Duties Paid).</p> <p><b>GREEN rating for 3.41% cumulative KPI for staff absence</b></p>

KPI	Performance	Comment on any highlights/risks/mitigation
<p><b>9.</b> We will ensure we achieve the minimum standard of paying <b>95%</b> of undisputed invoices within 30 days</p> <p><b>10.</b> We will achieve the minimum standard of paying <b>75%</b> of undisputed invoices within 10 day prompt payment target</p>	<p><b>Cum</b> (n=1310)</p> <p><b>30 Day KPI</b> <b>98.78%</b></p> <p><b>10 Day KPI</b> <b>92.37%</b></p>	<p><b>Across months 1-12 of 2022-23</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>1,310</b> invoices paid, with a value of £3.29m</li> <li>• <b>92.37%</b> of invoices paid within 10 days (£2.85m)</li> <li>• <b>98.78%</b> of invoices paid within 30 days (£3.17m)</li> </ul> <p><b>GREEN rating for 92.37% and 98.78% cumulative KPIs</b> reflects the strong performance across procurement, processing and approval of invoices to ensure efficient processing of payments. As shown below, the KPI standards for 10 and 30 day payments were met throughout the year, except for a marginal drop below the KPI in January 2023 (73.17% and 92.68%).</p>
<p><b>11.</b> We will manage our finances to achieve financial breakeven target of <b>0.25% or £20k</b> (whichever is greater)</p>	<p><b>At end of Month 12</b> Unaudited Year-End Position <b>£9,737</b></p>	<p>Month 12 finance reports indicate a £9,737 underspend at 31 March 2023. The unaudited breakeven position target has therefore been reached for the financial year 2022-23.</p> <p><b>GREEN rating for breakeven position against KPI</b> is based on the following summary of actual income and expenditure. Further information is provided in the accounts section of this report.</p>
<p><b>12.</b> We will ensure the Online Registration Portal is available at least <b>98%</b> of time during the year</p>	<p><b>Month 12</b> <b>Cum</b> <b>99%</b></p> <p><b>Number of Portal Sessions</b> n=422k</p>	<p><b>Across months 1-12 of 2022-23</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>99%</b> Portal availability</li> <li>• <b>422k</b> portal sessions</li> <li>• <b>3.27m</b> page views</li> </ul> <p><b>GREEN rating for 99% cumulative KPI</b> reflects the robust systems in place to monitor system performance and address service issues as they are reported by users. In addition to maintaining the online system, the team managed development and testing for upgrade of the CRM system for the database and portal. Staff and stakeholders were assisted with payment issues, log-in assistance, employment details, endorser permissions/videoconferencing/printers. Registration support provided for cancelled applications/ voluntary removals/ fee generation/ bulk updates, training.</p>

**Performance Analysis for 2022-23**

**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 recognise that there may be some adaptations needed as we continue to prioritise and deliver our business in response to the demands and constraints placed on operations by the COVID pandemic and the current financial climate. 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 ensure that the Social Care Council listens to those priorities and ambitions to make sure we continue to work with and for our stakeholders.



Patricia Higgins,  
Chief Executive, Northern Ireland Social Care Council

Date: 05 July 2023

## 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 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:**

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

The Social Care Council is a partner in the UK Alliance, Skills for Care and Development (SfCD), responsible for social care and children's services throughout the UK. As partners we're committed to supporting employers to create a world-class workforce, that's vital for the growth of the economy and the wellbeing of people who need care and support in our communities.

The Social Care Council is led by a Board which comprises a Chair and 6 non-Executive Members who have responsibility for ensuring the Board's strategic policies as agreed with the DoH are successfully delivered. Details of the Board's 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. 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.

#### 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 are held to encourage staff teams to share information about the work that they do. The staff intranet is updated regularly 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.

**Director's Report****Prompt Payment Policy****Public Sector Payment Policy – Measure of Compliance**

The Department of Health requires that NISCC pay their non-HSC trade creditors in accordance with applicable terms and appropriate Government Accounting guidance. The NISCC's payment policy is consistent with applicable terms and appropriate Government Accounting guidance and its measure of compliance is:

	2023		2022	
	Number	Value £	Number	Value £
Total bills paid	1,310	3,286,085	1,124	2,724,320
Total bills paid within 30 day target	1,294	3,165,196	1,122	2,716,964
<b>% of bills paid within 30 day target</b>	<b>98.78%</b>	<b>96%</b>	<b>99.8%</b>	<b>99.7%</b>
Total bills paid within 10 day target	1,210	2,847,061	1,094	2,660,883
<b>% of bills paid within 10 day target</b>	<b>92.37%</b>	<b>87%</b>	<b>97.3%</b>	<b>98%</b>

**The Late Payment of Commercial Debts Regulations 2002**

Amount of compensation paid for payment(s) being late	£ -
Total	-

## Director's Report

### 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 the mandatory e-learning module 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 two written complaints about its services during 2022-23. The complaints were not upheld. One of the complaints received escalated to the next internal stage for review but was not upheld. No complaints were received from the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman.

### Audit Information

The Directors can confirm that there is no relevant audit information of which the auditors are not 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.

Director's Report

## 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, Declan McAllister and Marian O'Rourke)

**Patricia Higgins** (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** (Director of Regulation and Standards) has responsibility for the Fitness to Practise function, the regulation of social work education and training at qualifying level and the Professional in Practice CPD framework for social workers, and the development of the social work and social care workforces.

## Northern Ireland Social Care Council Board

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.



## Director's Report

### The Board is chaired by Mr Paul Martin supported by Board Members –

- Sarah Browne
- Roslyn Dougherty
- Gerard Guckian
- David Hayes
- Lee Wilson last day of service was 30/11/22
- Brenda Maitland  
last day of service was 31/12/22
- Jacqueline McGarvey
- Catherine McPhillips  
last day of service was 2/02/23
- Anne O'Reilly

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 2022-23 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 2022-23.

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, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor James House, 2 Cromac Avenue, Belfast, BT7 2JA, 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 Board Member Gerard 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 70.
- **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.

**Director's Report**

## 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** consists of providers of social care services from the statutory, private and 3rd sectors, 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,  
Chief Executive, Northern Ireland Social Care Council

Date: 05 July 2023

## Corporate Governance Report - Statement of Accounting Officer Responsibilities

### Accounts for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

Under the Health and Personal Social Services Act (Northern Ireland) 2001, the Department of Health has directed the Northern Ireland 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 accounts are prepared on an accruals basis and must provide a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Northern Ireland Social Care Council and of its income and expenditure, Statement of Financial Position and cash flows for the financial year.

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

- observe the Accounts Direction issued by the Department of Health, including the 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 accounts
- prepare the accounts on a going concern basis, and
- confirm that the Annual Report and Accounts as a whole is fair, balanced and understandable and take personal responsibility for the Annual Report and Accounts and the judgements required for determining that it is fair, balanced and understandable

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 propriety and regularity of the public finances for which the Accounting Officer is answerable, for keeping proper records and for safeguarding the Northern Ireland Social Care Council’s assets, are set out in Managing Public Money Northern Ireland published by the Department of Finance.”

As the Accounting Officer, I have taken all the steps that I ought to have taken to make myself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the Northern Ireland Social Care Council’s auditors are aware of that information. So far as I am aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the auditors are unaware.

## Corporate Governance Report - Governance Statement 2022-23

### Governance Statement 2022-23

#### 1. Introduction / Scope of Responsibility

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council (Social Care Council) is accounting for internal control. As Accounting Officer and 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.

As part of the HSC sector, the Social Care Council is expected to face significant financial challenges in 2023-24 and therefore extensive budget planning work to support the business plan is ongoing between the Social Care Council and the DoH.

#### 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 through completion of an annual Board self-assessment. The Board completed its self-assessment for year ended 31 March 2023 and updated the Action Plan which it will continue to review at least annually to ensure continual improvement in governance and best practice.

**Governance Statement 2022-23**

The Board agreed that –

- 18 indicators were assessed as Green (all good practices are in place);
- 0 indicators were assessed as Amber or Red.

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

Indicator	Board's Assessment
<b>1. Board Composition and Commitment</b>	
1.1 Board positions and size	Green
1.2 Balance and calibre of Board members	Green
1.3 Role of the Board	Green
1.4 Committees of the Board	Green
1.5 Board member commitment	Green
<b>2. 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	Green
2.4 Board member appraisal and personal development	Green
<b>3. 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. Board Engagement and Involvement</b>	
4.1 External stakeholders	Green
4.2 Internal stakeholders	Green
4.3 Board profile and visibility	Green

**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. The Board completed an independent review of board membership and skills in 2022-23 and currently 3 vacancies exist at Board level to meet the new Board complement of 9 members including the Chair.

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.

**Governance Statement 2022-23**

The Board is in the final stages of introducing a new Partnership Agreement which will replace the current Management Statement and Financial Memorandum (MSFM) in conjunction with the DOH. Meetings of the Board were held in open session six times during the year and records are maintained of the Board attendance. In addition, the Board held two Strategic Planning Sessions. During 2022-23 the Board attendance for all sessions was:

Overall this represents a 98.33% attendance rate when taken collectively over the year 2022-23. Attendance at Board Strategic Days, Committees and Partnerships during 2022-23 is set out below:

<b>Chair/ Member</b>	<b>Attendance at Board During 2022-23 (%)</b>
Paul Martin, Chair	100%
Sarah Browne, Member	100%
Roslyn Dougherty, Member	100%
Gerry Guckian, Member	100%
David Hayes, Member	83.3%
Brenda Maitland, Member	100%
Jacqueline McGarvey, Member	100%
Catherine McPhillips, Member	100%
Anne O'Reilly, Member	100%
Lee Wilson, Member	100%

	<b>Board Strategic</b>	<b>Audit &amp; Risk Assurance Committee</b>	<b>Remuneration Committee</b>	<b>Participation Forum</b>	<b>Leaders in Social Care Partnership</b>	<b>Professional in Practice Partnership</b>	<b>Registrants' Forum</b>
<b>FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS IN 2021/22</b>	4	4	2	4	4	4	5
P Martin	100%	N/A	100%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
S Browne	100%	N/A	100%	100%	100%	N/A	N/A
R Dougherty	100%	N/A	100%	N/A	N/A	100%	N/A
G Guckian	100%	100%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
D Hayes	50%	N/A	N/A	33.3%	N/A	N/A	N/A
B Maitland	100%	75%	N/A	100%	N/A	N/A	N/A
J McGarvey	100%	100%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	60%
C McPhillips	100%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	100%	N/A
A O'Reilly	75%	N/A	N/A	N/A	75%	N/A	N/A
L Wilson	100%	100%	100%	0%	N/A	N/A	N/A

(attendance % refers to those meetings the member was eligible to attend)

## **Governance Statement 2022-23**

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 has developed a four-year Strategic 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 Strategic Plan takes account of recent developments in social care strategy including the Minister of Health's strategy 'Health and Wellbeing 2026'. The Strategic 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 Strategic Plan is available on the Social Care Council's website.

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

To give effect to the Strategic 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.

## **Governance Statement 2022-23**

A Business Performance Management Report is presented to the Board for scrutiny on a quarterly basis, 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.

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.

## **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. The Board agrees the strategic risks that impact on the delivery of the organisation's strategic plan and annual business plan. The Board's Audit and Risk Assurance Committee review the strategic risks in detail at each of their meetings, ensuring the controls and actions are having a positive impact on the mitigation of the risks.

The risk appetite agreed by the Board in relation to each of the strategic themes and strategic risks from cautious to hungry is in place along with an agreed risk appetite statement for each of its risk appetite areas (finance, compliance, safety, service delivery and reputation).

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.



## **Governance Statement 2022-23**

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.

## **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. 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 staff completed the annual Fraud E-learning support resource.

## **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.44,000) 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)

## **Governance Statement 2022-23**

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 ensures that the information it produces and creates is used appropriately, stored and shared safely and is compliant with its Information Management policies. Where information or data is shared outside of the organisation, Data Sharing Protocols, and Data Sharing Agreements are agreed in advance as necessary. The transfer of information is also subject to compliance with GDPR.

The organisation has ICT policies in place that include protecting against the risk of a cyber-security event and draws upon the services of the Business Services Organisation (ITS) to support it in the delivery of robust cyber security protocols and arrangements. The Board, the Senior Executive Team and all staff are trained in cyber security awareness and are regularly reminded of their personal responsibility to be vigilant and how to report any concerns.

The Social Care Council can report that there were no data breaches or cyber security incidents during the year.

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

## **Governance Statement 2022-23**

The Social Care Council is currently reviewing all of the above policies and ensuring they are aligned to the HSC suite of IT and related policies.

The Accounting Officer and Board receive quarterly reports through the Assurance Report on the management of all risks, including those in relation to IT, information and other potential threats. The Assurance Report highlights any gaps in assurance and how these are being remedied. In addition, an end of year Assurance Report is produced that highlights assurances (and gaps) across all areas of business. This Report is provided to the Senior Leadership Team, the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and the Board.

## **Public Stakeholder Involvement**

The Social Care Council's engagement with people who use services and 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 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)
- Leaders in Social Care Partnership (comprising employers of the social care workforce)
- The Professional in Practice Partnership (comprising employers of social workers, Higher Education Institutions (HEI's), and other education providers who are key to the delivery of the PiP Framework).
- Registrants Forum (comprising registrants): Currently Under Review to develop proposals for effective engagement with social work and social care registrants. Work continues with regular oversight by the Board.

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/Forums. This holistic approach to engagement ensures that any risks identified by stakeholders are brought to the attention of the Board. It is noted that the registrant's forum is currently under review in terms of its governance and remit with final determination to be agreed by the Board during 2023-24.

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 carers, and other stakeholders in the development of policy and other initiatives.

## **Governance Statement 2022-23**

### **6. 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 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.

### **7. 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

**Governance Statement 2022-23**

**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 2022-23 Internal Audit reviewed the following systems:

- Performance Management and Reporting, providing a satisfactory assurance
- Joint Recruitment Review with Shared Service, providing a limited assurance
- Financial Review, providing a satisfactory assurance
- Information Governance, providing satisfactory assurance
- Complaints, providing a satisfactory assurance on complaints handling and limited assurance on complaints governance.

In her annual report, the Internal Auditor reported that she can provide satisfactory assurance on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Social Care Council’s framework of governance, risk management and control. 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 address these. A number of the actions relating to limited assurance audits are detailed as follows;

<b>Audit</b>	<b>Action</b>
Recruitment	<p>The Social Care Council should enhance controls to provide assurances that all panel members have been appropriately trained</p> <p>The Social Care Council should develop and implement an action plan to improve recruitment key performance indicators</p>
Complaints	The Social Care Council should review and enhance complaints handling performance reporting

**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. An unqualified audit opinion was provided in 2021-22.

**Other Independent Assurances**

The Social Care Council was awarded IIP Gold for the new Health and Wellbeing assessment standard during 2022-23 and this compliments the current IIP Gold standard award for Investors in people achieved in 2021/22.

## **Governance Statement 2022-23**

An independent review of Board composition and skills was also completed during 2022-23 and a number of recommendations have been identified with an associated action plan now in place.

An independent review of the management of fee income was also completed in year following the impact of Covid and fee collection from April 2020. The Social Care Council was found to be in compliance with Financial Reporting standards with a small number of recommendations which now have been actioned.

### **8. 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.

### **9. Internal Governance Divergences**

#### **Internal Control Issues now Resolved 2021/22**

In response to COVID-19 the DOH introduced the interim policy decision to defer all registration fees and not to remove anyone from the register. The Social Care Council managed this interim change; however, it had a knock-on effect on fee recovery which resulted in significant pressures for the Registration team and the organisation during 2021/22. Following the completion of an independent review and delivery of an action plan; registration services are now in a business-as-usual status.

The interim arrangements put in place to fill senior positions including the Chief Executive post have now been resolved and permanent appointments have now been made.

#### **Internal Control Issues 2022-23**

A number of audits have been conducted in BSO Shared Services, as part of the BSO Internal Audit Plan, including those for the Payroll Service Centre (split level of assurance was given whereby some aspects given limited assurance and other elementary processes satisfactory assurance) and Recruitment Shared Services (Limited Assurance was given). While these reports are the responsibility of BSO Management to take forward, the Social Care Council will keep these matters under review to ensure they do not adversely impact on the organisation.

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.

## Governance Statement 2022-23

### 11. EU Exit

The Social Care Council is working alongside the Department of Health and the other Arms-Length bodies following EU Exit. The Social Care Council is satisfied that it is able to operate its business effectively, however collaborative working with regulators across the UK and Ireland will continue to ensure the maintenance of standards and the right to work in Social Work and Social Care. This includes working with the Department of Health and ROI counterparts to help register ROI Social Workers and Social Care Workers who wish to work in Northern Ireland.

### 12. Budget Position and Authority

The Northern Ireland Budget Act 2023 was passed by Parliament and received Royal Assent on 8 February 2023 which authorised the cash and use of resources for all departments and other bodies for the full 2022-23 year, and also included a Vote on Account for the early months of the 2023-24 financial year. This will be followed by a further Budget Bill which the Secretary of State will bring to Parliament in due course, following the 2023-24 Northern Ireland Budget which he set in his Written Ministerial Statement on 27 April 2023.

The *Written Ministerial Statement* has enabled the Department of Health to issue opening allocations for 2023-24 which will enable essential services to continue. However, despite plans to deliver significant efficiencies, the budget allocation provided has resulted in a significant funding gap. The Department of Health and its Arm's Length Bodies are currently working on the development of further savings measures to bridge the gap. However, it is clear that, if the Department of Health does not receive significant additional funding, the implementation of high impact savings will be required, with adverse consequences for an already highly pressurised health and social care system which would be very damaging for service delivery.

### 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 2022-23.



**Patricia Higgins**

Chief Executive

Northern Ireland Social Care Council

05 July 2023

## Corporate Governance Report - Audit and 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 2022-23:

- 4 May 2022
- 15 June 2022
- 7 July 2022 (this was an Extraordinary Meeting)
- 5 October 2022
- 25 January 2023

During the 2022-23 financial year, membership of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee was as follows:

APRIL 2022 – MARCH 2023	ATTENDANCE AT AUDIT and RISK ASSURANCE COMMITTEE (%)
Mr Gerry Guickan	100%
Mrs Brenda Maitland	75%
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 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 2022-23 financial year, the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee undertook the following tasks:

- Agreed an Internal Audit Plan;
- Considered an External Audit Strategy;
- Reviewed the Social Care Council's Assurance Framework;
- Reviewed the impact of COVID at each of their meetings and the actions and controls taken to mitigate against this risk;
- Reviewed the impact of the deferral of registration fees including the consequential impact on registration business volumes, and the action taken to bring this risk under control;
- 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 the previous business year 2021-22.



### **Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Report**

- Considered the NIAO Report to Those Charged with Governance.
- Reviewed the Social Care Council's Procurement Report, including the Contract Register and Direct Award Contract Report for 2022-23.
- 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 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 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 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 2022-23, 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 the year ended 31 March 2023

### Remuneration Report for the year ended 31 March 2023

#### 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, Lee Wilson, Roslyn Doherty and Sarah Brown. The Remuneration Committee met in this form on 1 June 2022.

#### 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 2022-23.

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, and
- 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).

**Remuneration and Staff Report**

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
Sarah Browne	Council Member	1 April 2018
Roslyn Dougherty	Council Member	1 April 2018
David Hayes	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

\* Lee Wilson last day of service was 30/11/22

\*\* Brenda Maitland last day of service was 31/12/22.

\*\*\*Catherine McPhillips last day of service was 2/02/23

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS**

NAME	POSITION	DATE OF APPOINTMENT
Mrs Patricia Higgins	Chief Executive	From 3 September 2018 (Director of Regulation and Standards from 1 June 2002, Chief Executive from May 2022).
Mr Declan McAllister	Director of Registration and Corporate Services	17 July 2017
Mrs Marian O’Rourke	Director of Regulation and Standards	From 8 October 2018 (Head of Workforce Development from 1 April 2014, Director of Regulation and Standards from September 2022).

**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**

The Social Care Council does not operate a general retirement age for all staff. However the BSO reserves the right to require an individual employee or group of employees to retire at a particular age where this is objectively justified in the particular circumstances of the case.

**COMPENSATION FOR PREMATURE RETIREMENT**

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

- Efficiency of the service.
- Redundancy.

## **Remuneration and Staff Report**

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 no longer qualify for transitional protection, enhancement of service or an additional lump sum payment if they choose to take early retirement. They can opt to either take a redundancy payment, or use that redundancy payment to offset the costs associated with claiming pension benefits early, i.e. before their normal retirement age. Further detail is available in Sections 16.12 and 16.13 on the AfC Handbook.

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 - AUDITED**

There were no exit packages during 2021-22 or 2022-23

**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 Northern Ireland Social Care Council were as follows:

Single total figure of remuneration									
Name	Salary £000s		Benefits in kind (rounded to nearest £100)		Pension Benefits (rounded to nearest £1,000)		Total £000s		
	2022-23	2021-22	2022-23	2021-22	2022-23	2021-22	2022-23	2021-22	
<b>Non-Executive Members</b>									
Paul Martin	15-20	15-20	-	-	-	-	15-20	15-20	
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	
Roslyn Dougherty	5-10	5-10	-	-	-	-	5-10	5-10	
Christine Hunter****	-	5-10	-	-	-	-	-	5-10	

\* Lee Wilson last day of service was 30/11/22  
 \*\* Brenda Maitland last day of service was 31/12/22.  
 \*\*\*Catherine McPhillips last day of service was 2/02/23  
 \*\*\*\*\* Christine Hunter last day of service was 31/3/22

**Senior Employees' Remuneration (Audited)**

Name	Salary £000s		Benefits in kind (rounded to nearest £100)		Pension Benefits (rounded to nearest £1,000)		Total £000s	
	2022-23	2021-22	2022-23	2021-22	2022-23	2021-22	2022-23	2021-22
*Patricia Higgins	90-95	80-85	-	-	30	9	120-125	90-95
Declan McAllister	75-80	75-80	-	-	32	48	105-110	120-125
Marian O'Rourke	75-80	70-75	-	-	32	41	105-110	110-115

\*Patricia Higgins salary has been restated for 2021-22 to show actual remuneration paid (including pay awards paid)

**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 2022-23 or in 2021-22.

**Pensions of Senior Management (Audited)**

Name	Accrued pension at pension age as at 31/3/23 and related lump sum £000	Real increase in pension and related lump sum at pension age £000	CETV at 31/03/23 £000	CETV at 31/03/22 £000	Real increase in CETV £000
Patricia Higgins	30-35 Plus lump sum 85-90	0-2.5 Plus lump sum of 0-2.5	698	699	15
Declan McAllister	25-30 Plus lump sum 50-55	0-2.5 Plus lump sum of 0-2.5	543	505	12
Marian O'Rourke	20-25 Plus lump sum of 0-2.5	0-2.5 Plus lump sum of 0-2.5	352	308	15

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

**Remuneration and Staff Report**

**Cash Equivalent Transfer Values**

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. CETV figures are calculated using the guidance on discount rates for calculating unfunded public service pension contribution rates that was extant at 31 March 2023. HM Treasury published updated guidance on 27 April 2023; this guidance will be used in the calculation of 2023-24 CETV figures.

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 - Audited**

Northern Ireland Social Care Council is required to disclose the relationship between the remuneration of the highest paid Director and the lower quartile, median and upper quartile remuneration of the organisation's workforce. Following application of the guidance contained in DoH Circular (F) 23/2013, the following can be reported:

<b>*Disclosure</b>	<b>2022-23</b>	<b>2021-22</b>
**Band of the Highest Paid Director's Total Remuneration	90-95	80-85
25 <sup>th</sup> Percentile Total Remuneration	23,177	21,776
Median Total Remuneration	32,934	32,306
75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile Total Remuneration	40,588	42,121
Ratio (25%/Median/75%)	3.93/2.76/2.24	3.87/2.61/2.0

\*Agency staff are not included in the fair pay disclosure calculations.

\*\*Band of highest paid director's total remuneration has been restated for 2021-22 to show actual remuneration paid (including pay awards paid).

**Remuneration and Staff Report**

The banded remuneration of the highest-paid director in the Social Care Council in the financial year 2022-23 was £90-95k (2022; £80-85k) which was:

- 3.93 times (2022; 3.87) the 25<sup>th</sup> percentile remuneration of the workforce, which was £23,177 (2022; £21,776).
- 2.76 times (2022; 2.43) the median remuneration of the workforce, which was £32,934 (2022; £32,306).
- 2.24 times (2022; 1.86) the 75<sup>th</sup> percentile remuneration of the workforce, which was £40,588 (2021; £42,121).

In 2022-23, 0 (2021-22; 0) employees received remuneration in excess of the highest-paid director. Remuneration ranged from £21,730 to £81,540 (2022: £20,329 to £78,367). Total remuneration includes salary, non-consolidated performance-related pay, and benefits-in kind. The percentage change in remuneration in respect of the Social Care Council are shown in the following table:

<b>Disclosure</b>	<b>2022-23 Vs 2021-22</b>
Average employee salary and allowances	0.39%
Highest paid director's salary and allowances	8.05%

No performance payments or bonuses were payable to Social Care Council employees in these years.

**Staff Report for the year ended 31 March 2023**

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' pay bands. Changes to staff policies, terms or conditions are consulted on and developed in collaboration with staff-side organisations and unions (Joint Negotiating Forum). 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. Details of staff engagement and equality initiatives are included on page 51 of this report.

**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.



**Remuneration and Staff Report**

The cumulative sickness and absenteeism rate for the Social Care Council for 2022-23 was 3.41% which was below the Northern Ireland Social Care Council's corporate target to maintain absences at a maximum of 3.5%.

**Staff Composition - Audited**

At 31 March 2023, 63 people worked for the Social Care Council. 51 people were employed on permanent contracts, 6 of whom worked part-time. 7 people were employed on temporary/fixed term contracts and 5 were engaged temporarily as agency workers. 11.1% of contracted staff work part-time or a form of compressed hours (this was 13% in 2021-/22). From January 2023, staff could opt into the Social Care Council's Agile Working Policy – 100% of staff opted to do so.

Turnover rates for permanent staff was 7.9% in 2022-23 (5.94% in 2021-22).

The composition of the workforce is set out below –

**Staff composition by pay band**

<b>Pay Band</b>	<b>% of Workforce</b>	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Band 3	27%	17
Band's 4/6	49%	31
Band's 7/8	19%	12
SLT	5%	3

**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 (contracted Staff)**

<b>Pay Band (Contracted Staff)</b>	<b>Male Number</b>	<b>Female Number</b>
Band 3	5	10
Band's 4/6	9	19
Band's 7/8	4	8
SLT	1	2
Overall	19	39

**Remuneration and Staff Report****Staff Report****Staff Numbers and Related Costs (Audited)**

## Staff Costs

	2023		2022	
Staff costs comprise:	Permanently employed staff £	Others £	Total £	Total £
Wages and salaries	2,215,360	262,448	2,477,808	2,393,798
Social security costs	237,011	-	237,011	216,554
Other pension costs	445,023	-	445,023	412,626
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>2,897,394</b>	<b>262,448</b>	<b>3,159,842</b>	<b>3,022,978</b>
Capitalised staff costs	-	-	-	-
<b>Total staff costs reported in Statement of Comprehensive Expenditure</b>			<b>3,159,842</b>	<b>3,022,978</b>
Less recoveries in respect of outward secondments			-	-
<b>Total net costs</b>			<b><u>3,159,842</u></b>	<b><u>3,022,978</u></b>

The Social Care Council participates in the HSC Pension Scheme. Under this multi-employer defined benefit scheme both the Northern Ireland 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 2022-23 accounts.

The Working Time (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020 came into operation on 24 April 2020 and enabled those workers who were 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 ending on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023. 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 is limited to the period up to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023. Requests to carry over leave under the regulations have been assessed by departmental managers and accruals accounted for in the final expenditure.

**Remuneration and Staff Report****Staff Report - Average number of persons employed (Audited)**

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

	2023		2022	
	Permanently employed staff No.	Others No.	Total No.	Total No.
Administrative and clerical	42*	10	52	47
Social services	18	1	19	15
<b>Total average number of persons employed</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>62</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>71</b>	<b>62</b>

The staff numbers disclosed as 'Others' in 2022-23 relate to temporary members of staff.

\*Financial Year 22-23 staff numbers exclude 9 Non-executive members.

**Staff Report - 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	
	2023	2022	2023	2022	2023	2022
<£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>	-	-	-	-	-	-

## **Remuneration and Staff Report**

Redundancy and other departure costs are 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 2022-23 and 2021-22. £nil exit costs were paid in 2022-23, the year of departure (2021-22 £nil). Where the Northern Ireland Social Care Council has agreed early retirements, the additional costs are met by the Northern Ireland 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 2022-23.

The Social Care Council recognises that all payment disclosures should be reported in line with best practice set out in FReM 6.5.3-4, where there is a presumption that information about named individuals will be given in all circumstances, and all disclosures in the remuneration report will be consistent with identifiable information of those individuals in the financial statements. In these circumstances, the individual would be advised in advance of the intention to disclose information about them, with an invitation for sight of the intended information to be published and notification that the individual can challenge this decision under Article 21 of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).



Patricia Higgins,  
Chief Executive, Northern Ireland Social Care Council

Date: 05 July 2023

## Accountability and Audit Report

### Accountability Report - Assembly Disclosure Notes

**i) Losses and Special Payments (Audited)**

The Social Care Council had no losses or special payments during 2022-23 or 2021-22

**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 IAS37, the NISCC 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 NISCC had no remote contingent liabilities.

**iv) Charitable Donations (Unaudited)**

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.

#### Regularity

In 2022-23 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. 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. Department of Health guidance on expenditure is implemented as appropriate and forms part of the Standing Financial Instructions of the Social Care Council.

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,

Chief Executive, Northern Ireland Social Care Council

Date: 05 July 2023

## **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 2023 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.

The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and UK adopted international accounting standards as interpreted and adapted by the Government Financial Reporting Manual. 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 2023 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 for opinions**

I conducted my audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (ISAs) (UK), applicable law and Practice Note 10 'Audit of Financial Statements and Regularity of Public Sector Bodies 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 that are relevant to my audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the Financial Reporting Council's Ethical Standard, 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**

In auditing the financial statements, I have concluded that the Northern Ireland Social Care Council's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work I have performed, I have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the Northern Ireland Social Care Council's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

The going concern basis of accounting for the Northern Ireland Social Care Council is adopted in consideration of the requirements set out in the Government Reporting Manual, which require entities to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements where it anticipated that the services which they provide will continue into the future.

My responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Board and the Accounting Officer with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

### **Other Information**

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

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 I identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, I am required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. 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, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- 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.

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

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the Northern Ireland Social Care Council and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, I have not identified material misstatements in the Performance Report and Accountability Report. 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
- certain disclosures of remuneration specified by the Government Financial Reporting Manual are not made; 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.

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

As explained more fully in the Statement of Accounting Officer Responsibilities, the Board and the Accounting Officer are responsible for:

- the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view;
- such internal controls as the Accounting Officer determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error;

- ensuring the annual report, which includes the Remuneration and Staff Report is prepared in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework; and
- assessing the Northern Ireland Social Care Council's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Accounting Officer anticipates that the services provided by the Northern Ireland Social Care Council will not continue to be provided in the future.

### **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 reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error and to issue a certificate that includes my opinion. 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.

I design procedures in line with my responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of non-compliance with laws and regulation, including fraud.

My procedures included:

- obtaining an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework applicable to the Northern Ireland Social Care Council through discussion with management and application of extensive public sector accountability knowledge. The key laws and regulations I considered included the Health and Personal Social Services Act (Northern Ireland) 2001 and Department of Health directions issued thereunder;
- making enquires of management and those charged with governance on the Northern Ireland Social Care Council's compliance with laws and regulations;
- making enquiries of internal audit, management and those charged with governance as to susceptibility to irregularity and fraud, their assessment of the risk of material misstatement due to fraud and irregularity, and their knowledge of actual, suspected and alleged fraud and irregularity;
- completing risk assessment procedures to assess the susceptibility of the Northern Ireland Social Care Council's financial statements to material misstatement, including how fraud might occur. This included, but was not limited to, an engagement director led engagement team discussion on fraud to identify particular areas, transaction streams and business practices that may be susceptible to material misstatement due to fraud. As part of this discussion, I identified potential for fraud in the posting of unusual journals;
- engagement director oversight to ensure the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with the applicable legal and regulatory framework throughout the audit;
- designing audit procedures to address specific laws and regulations which the engagement team considered to have a direct material effect on the financial statements in terms of misstatement and irregularity, including fraud. These audit procedures included, but were not limited to, reading board and committee minutes, and agreeing financial statement disclosures to underlying supporting documentation and approvals as appropriate;
- addressing the risk of fraud as a result of management override of controls by:



- performing analytical procedures to identify unusual or unexpected relationships or movements;
- testing journal entries to identify potential anomalies, and inappropriate or unauthorised adjustments;
- assessing whether judgements and other assumptions made in determining accounting estimates were indicative of potential bias; and
- investigating significant or unusual transactions made outside of the normal course of business.

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.

### **Report**

I have no observations to make on these financial statements.



*Dorinnia Carville*  
*Comptroller and Auditor General*  
*Northern Ireland Audit Office*  
*106 University Street*  
*BELFAST*  
*BT7 1EU*  
*9 August 2023*

## **Section 3: Annual Accounts for the Year Ended 31 March 2023**

### **NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL**

### **ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 March 2023**

#### **FOREWORD**

The accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023 have been prepared in a form determined by the Department of Health based on guidance from the Department of Finance Financial Reporting manual (FReM) and in accordance with the requirements of the Health and Social Care (Reform) Act (Northern Ireland) 2009.

**NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL  
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 March 2023**

**CERTIFICATE OF THE CHAIRMAN AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

I certify that the annual accounts set out in the financial statements and notes to the accounts (pages 90-130) 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 Northern Ireland Social Care Council and with the accounting standards and policies for HSC bodies approved by the DoH.

Chief Executive



Date: 05 July 2023

I certify that the annual accounts set out in the financial statements and notes to the accounts (pages 90-130) as prepared in accordance with the above requirements have been submitted to and duly approved by the Board.

Chairman



Date: 05 July 2023

Chief Executive



Date: 05 July 2023

**NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL  
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 March 2023**

**STATEMENT of COMPREHENSIVE NET EXPENDITURE for the year ended 31 March 2023**

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	2023 £	2022 £
Revenue from contracts with customers	4.1	1,459,391	1,280,742
Other Income (excluding interest)	4.2	-	-
<b>Total operating income</b>		<b>1,459,391</b>	<b>1,280,742</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Staff costs	3	(3,159,842)	(3,022,978)
Purchase of goods and services	3	(23,821)	(18,747)
Depreciation, amortisation and impairment charges	3	(125,655)	(129,393)
Provision expense	3	(20,949)	-
Other expenditure	3	(2,393,349)	(2,147,160)
<b>Total operating expenditure</b>		<b>(5,723,616)</b>	<b>(5,318,278)</b>
<b>Net Expenditure</b>		<b>(4,264,225)</b>	<b>(4,037,536)</b>
Finance income	4.2	-	-
Finance expense	3	-	-
<b>Net expenditure for the year</b>		<b>(4,264,225)</b>	<b>(4,037,536)</b>
Adjustment to net expenditure for non-cash items		178,104	159,143
Net expenditure funded from RRL		(4,086,121)	(3,878,393)
Revenue resource limit (RRL)	23.1	4,095,858	3,885,406
Add back charitable trust fund net expenditure		-	-
<b>Surplus/(Deficit) against RRL</b>		<b>9,737</b>	<b>7,013</b>

**NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL  
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 March 2023**

**OTHER COMPREHENSIVE EXPENDITURE**

	<b>NOTE</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
		<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Items that will not be reclassified to net operating costs:</b>			
Net gain/(loss) on revaluation of property, plant and equipment	5.1/8/5.2/9	-	-
Net gain/(loss) on revaluation of intangibles	6.1/8/6.2/9	4,926	(3,064)
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 2023</b>		<b>(4,259,299)</b>	<b>(4,040,600)</b>

The notes on pages 95-130 form part of these accounts.


**NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL**  
**ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 March 2023**

**STATEMENT of FINANCIAL POSITION as at 31 March 2023**

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	2023		2022	
		£	£	£	£
<b>Non-current Assets</b>					
Property, plant and equipment	5.1/5.2	79,891		79,403	
Intangible assets	6.1/6.2	525,780		258,583	
Financial assets	7	-		-	
Trade and other receivables	13	-		-	
Other current assets	13	-		-	
<b>Total Non-current Assets</b>			<b>605,671</b>		<b>337,986</b>
<b>Current Assets</b>					
Assets classified as held for sale	10	-		-	
Inventories	11	-		-	
Trade and other receivables	13	41,860		14,799	
Other current assets	13	18,294		74,985	
Intangible current assets	13	-		-	
Financial assets	7	-		-	
Cash and cash equivalents	12	157,399		141,766	
<b>Total Current Assets</b>			<b>217,553</b>		<b>231,550</b>
<b>Total Assets</b>			<b>823,224</b>		<b>569,536</b>
<b>Current Liabilities</b>					
Trade and other payables	14	(1,732,774)		(1,462,855)	
Other liabilities	14	-		-	
Intangible current liabilities	14	-		-	
Financial liabilities	7	-		-	
Provisions	15	-		-	
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>			<b>(1,732,774)</b>		<b>(1,462,855)</b>
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>			<b>(909,550)</b>		<b>(893,319)</b>
<b>Non-current Liabilities</b>					
Provisions	15	(20,949)		-	
Other payables > 1 yr	14	-		-	
Financial liabilities	7	-		-	
<b>Total Non-current Liabilities</b>			<b>(20,949)</b>		<b>-</b>
<b>Total assets less total liabilities</b>			<b>(930,499)</b>		<b>(893,319)</b>
<b>Taxpayers' Equity and other reserves</b>					
Revaluation reserve		37,933		33,007	
SoCNE reserve		(968,432)		(926,326)	
<b>Total equity</b>			<b>(930,499)</b>		<b>(893,319)</b>

The financial statements on pages 95-130 were approved by the Board on 05 July 2023 and were signed on its behalf by:

Signed  (Chief Executive)

Date 05 July 2023

Signed  (Chairman)

Date 05 July 2023

**NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL  
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 March 2023**

**STATEMENT of CASH FLOWS for the year ended 31 March 2023**

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	2023 £	2022 £
<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>			
Net surplus after interest/Net operating expenditure		(4,264,225)	(4,037,536)
Adjustments for non-cash costs	3	178,104	159,143
(Increase)/decrease in trade and other receivables		29,630	(19,808)
<i>Less movements in receivables relating to items not passing through the NEA</i>			
Movements in receivables relating to the sale of property, plant and 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		269,919	330,427
<i>Less movements in payables relating to items not passing through the NEA</i>			
Movements in payables relating to the purchase of property, plant and equipment		(69,900)	24,499
Movements in payables relating to the purchase of intangibles		(3,968)	-
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>		<b>(3,860,440)</b>	<b>(3,543,275)</b>
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>			
(Purchase of property, plant and equipment)	5	36,349	(52,311)
(Purchase of intangible assets)	6	(350,895)	(11,999)
Proceeds of disposal of property, plant and equipment		-	-
Proceeds on disposal of intangibles		-	-
Proceeds on disposal of assets held for resale		-	-
<b>Net cash outflow from investing activities</b>		<b>(314,546)</b>	<b>(64,310)</b>
<b>Cash flows from financing activities</b>			
Grant in aid		4,190,619	3,656,793
Cap element of payments - finance leases and on balance sheet (SoFP) PFI and other service concession arrangements		-	-
<b>Net financing</b>		<b>4,190,619</b>	<b>3,656,793</b>
<b>Net increase (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents in the period</b>		<b>15,633</b>	<b>49,208</b>
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the period</b>	12	<b>141,766</b>	<b>92,558</b>
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the period</b>	12	<b>157,399</b>	<b>141,766</b>

The notes on pages 95-130 form part of these accounts.

**NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL  
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 March 2023**

**STATEMENT of CHANGES in TAXPAYERS EQUITY for the year ended 31 March 2023**

This statement shows the movement in the year on the different reserves held by 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 £	Total £
<b>Balance at 31 March 2021</b>		<b>(575,333)</b>	<b>36,071</b>	<b>(539,262)</b>
<b>Changes in Taxpayers Equity 2021-22</b>				
Grant from DoH		3,656,793	-	3,656,793
Other reserves including transfers (Comprehensive net expenditure for the year)		(4,037,536)	(3,064)	(4,040,600)
Transfer of Asset Ownership				-
Non-cash charges – auditors remuneration	3	29,750	-	29,750
<b>Balance at 31 March 2022</b>		<b>(926,326)</b>	<b>33,007</b>	<b>(893,319)</b>
<b>Changes in Taxpayers Equity 2022-23</b>				
Grant from DoH		4,190,619	-	4,190,619
Other reserves movements including transfers (Comprehensive net expenditure for the year)		(4,264,225)	4,926	(4,259,299)
Transfer of asset ownership				-
Non-cash charges – auditors remuneration	3	31,500	-	31,500
<b>Balance at 31 March 2023</b>		<b>(968,432)</b>	<b>37,933</b>	<b>(930,499)</b>



**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023  
STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

**1. Authority**

These financial statements 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 contained in the FReM apply International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) as adapted or interpreted for the public sector context. Where the FReM permits a choice of accounting policy, 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 particular policies adopted by the Northern Ireland Social Care Council are described below. They have been applied consistently in dealing with items considered material in relation to the accounts.

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 that 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.

**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 inventories and certain financial assets and liabilities.

**1.2 Property, Plant and Equipment**

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

**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 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.

**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023  
STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

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**

Northern Ireland Social Care Council did not own any Land and Building in the current 2022-23 financial year, or in the 2021-22 financial year.

**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)**

Assets 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. They are carried at cost, less any impairment loss. Assets under construction 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 exceeds 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.

**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023  
STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

**1.3 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

**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.

**1.4 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 buildings takes account of the fact that different components of those 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.

**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023  
STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

**1.5 Intangible assets**

Intangible assets include 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 non-current 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.

**1.6 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 through appropriate marketing at a reasonable price 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.

**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023  
STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

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.

**1.7 Inventories**

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

**1.8 Income**

Income is classified between Revenue from Contracts and Other Operating Income as assessed 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 on an accruals basis 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.

Income is stated net of VAT.

Registration fee income - NISCC has adopted IFRS 15 Revenue from Contracts with Customers (IFRS 15). NISCC receives the following types of registration fee income and accounts for them as follows:

- One off fees - One off fees comprise application, renewal and restoration fees. These fees are paid at the point of application, renewal or restoration and are non-refundable and are accounted for in full on receipt.
- Annual fees - Annual fees are due annually on the date the registrant was confirmed to the register. They are collected in advance, are non-refundable and are apportioned over the year the annual fee covers.

**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023  
STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

Under IFRS 15, the point of recognition of fees is based upon when the performance obligation of the contract is satisfied, and the benefits have been fully received by the registrant. NISCC fulfils its performance obligation by maintaining a social worker's and social care worker's registration over the annual registration period, therefore the annual fees are recognised in the statement of financial position as deferred income and are released to the statement of comprehensive net expenditure proportionately over the period that the fee relates to.

Deferred registration fee income that is recognised within the statement of financial position relates to the following financial year only and is recognised as a current liability.

**1.9 Grant in aid**

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

**1.10 Investments**

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

**1.11 Research and Development expenditure**

Research and development (R&D) expenditure is expensed in the year it is incurred in accordance with IAS 38.

Following the introduction of the 2010 European System of Accounts (ESA10), and the change in budgeting treatment (from the revenue budget to the capital budget) of R&D expenditure, additional disclosures are included in the notes to the accounts. This treatment was implemented from 2016-17.

**1.12 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.

**1.13 Leases**

Under IFRS 16 Leased Assets which the Northern Ireland Social Care Council has use/control over and which it does not necessarily legally own are to be recognised as a 'Right-Of-Use' (ROU) asset. There are only two exceptions:

- short term assets – with a life of up to one year; and
- low value assets – with a value equal to or below the Department's threshold limit which is currently £5,000.

**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023  
STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

**Short term leases**

Short term leases are defined as having a lease term of 12 months or less. Any lease with a purchase option cannot qualify as a short-term lease. The lessee must not exercise an option to extend the lease beyond 12 months. No liability should be recognised in respect of short-term leases, and neither should the underlying asset be capitalised.

Lease agreements which contain a purchase option cannot qualify as short-term. Examples of short-term leases are software leases, specialised equipment, hire cars and some property leases.

**Low value assets**

An asset is considered "low value" if its value, when new, is less than the capitalisation threshold. The application of the exemption is independent of considerations of materiality. The low value assessment is performed on the underlying asset, which is the value of that underlying asset when new. Examples of low value assets are, tablet and personal computers, small items of office furniture and telephones.

**Separating lease and service components**

Some contracts may contain both a lease element and a service element. DoH bodies can, at their own discretion, choose to combine lease and non-lease components of contracts, and account for the entire contract as a lease. If a contract contains both lease and service components IFRS 16 provides guidance on how to separate those components. If a lessee separates lease and service components, it should capitalise amounts related to the lease components and expense elements relating to the service elements. However, IFRS 16 also provides an option for lessees to combine lease and service components and account for them as a single lease. This option should help DoH bodies where it is time consuming or difficult to separate these components.

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

The ROU asset lease liability will initially be measured at the present value of the unavoidable future lease payments. The future lease payments should include any amounts for:

- Indexation;
- amounts payable for residual value;
- purchase price options;
- payment of penalties for terminating the lease;
- any initial direct costs; and
- costs relating to restoration of the asset at the end of the lease.

The lease liability is discounted using the rate implicit in the lease.

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 ALB's surplus/deficit.

**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023  
STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

The difference between the carrying amount and the lease liability on transition is recognised as an adjustment to taxpayer's equity. After transition the difference is recognised as income in accordance with IAS 20.

**Subsequent measurement**

After the commencement date (the date that the lessor makes the underlying asset available for use by the lessee) a lessee shall measure the liability by;

- Increasing the carrying amount to reflect interest;
- Reducing the carrying amount to reflect lease payments made; and
- Re-measuring the carrying amount to reflect any reassessments or lease modifications, or to reflect revised in substance fixed lease payments.

There is a need to reassess the lease liability in the future if there is:

- A change in lease term;
- change in assessment of purchase option;
- change in amounts expected to be payable under a residual value guarantee; or
- change in future payments resulting from change in index or rate.

Subsequent measurement of the ROU asset is measured in same way as other property, plant and equipment. Asset valuations should be measured at either 'fair value' or 'current value in existing use'.

**Depreciation**

Assets under a finance lease or ROU lease are depreciated over the shorter of the lease term and its useful life, unless there is a reasonable certainty the lessee will obtain ownership of the asset by the end of the lease term in which case it should be depreciated over its useful life.

The depreciation policy is that for other depreciable assets that are owned by the entity.

Leased assets under construction must also be depreciated.

**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.



**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023  
STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council will classify subleases as follows:

- If the head lease is short term (up to 1 year), the sublease is classified as an operating lease;
- otherwise, the sublease is classified with reference to the right-of-use asset arising from the head lease, rather than with reference to the underlying asset.

**1.14 Private Finance Initiative (PFI) transactions**

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

**1.15 Financial instruments**

A financial instrument is defined as any contract that gives rise to a financial asset of one entity and a financial liability or equity instrument of another entity.

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council has financial instruments in the form of trade receivables and payables and cash and cash equivalents.

**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 derecognised 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, where judged necessary.

Financial assets are classified into the following categories:

- financial assets at fair value through Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure;
- held to maturity investments;
- available for sale financial assets; and
- loans and receivables.

The classification depends on the nature and purpose of the financial assets and is determined at the time of initial recognition.

**Financial liabilities**

Financial liabilities are recognised on the Statement of Financial Position 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.

**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023  
STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

**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 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.

There are 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 its activities. Therefore, the Northern Ireland Social Care Council 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. There is therefore 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, there is 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, there is low exposure to significant liquidity risks.

**1.16 Provisions**

In accordance with IAS 37, provisions are recognised when there is a present legal or constructive obligation as a result of a past event, it is probable that the Northern Ireland Social Care Council will be required to settle the obligation, and a reliable estimate can be made of the amount of the obligation. The amount recognised as a provision is the best estimate of the expenditure required to settle the obligation at the end of the reporting period, taking into account the risks and uncertainties.

Where a provision is measured using the cash flows estimated to settle the obligation, its carrying amount is the present value of those cash flows using the relevant discount rates provided by HM Treasury.

When some or all of the economic benefits required to settle a provision are expected to be recovered from a third party, the receivable is recognised as an asset if it is virtually certain that reimbursements will be received, and the amount of the receivable can be measured reliably.

**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023  
STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

**1.17 Contingent liabilities/assets**

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council had no contingent assets or liabilities at either 31 March 2023 or 31 March 2022.

**1.18 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 2023. It is not anticipated that the level of untaken leave will vary significantly from year to year. However, during the 2021-22 financial year the unused annual leave balances and therefore the cost of unused leave accounted for increased due to COVID pressures resulting in staff being unable to take planned leave. To ensure staff didn't lose annual leave during the 2021-22 year, key workers were granted permission to carry over additional unused leave above the usual maximum of 5 days, to be taken within the next 2 financial years. The Northern Ireland Social Care Council's staff have key worker status and thus were able to avail of this. Untaken flexi leave is estimated to be immaterial to the Northern Ireland 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 Superannuation 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 with sufficient regularity that the amounts recognised in the financial statements do not differ materially from those determined at the reporting period date. This has been interpreted in the FR&M to mean that the period between formal actuarial valuations shall be 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 scheme valuation data provided for the 2020 actuarial valuation that is currently underway will be used in the 2022-23 accounts. Financial assumptions are updated to reflect recent financial conditions. Demographic assumptions are updated to reflect an analysis of experience that is being carried out as part of the 2020 valuation. Whilst the 2016 valuation remains the most recently completed valuation, the 2020 valuation is sufficiently progressed to use for setting the demographics assumptions.

**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023  
STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

**1.19 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.

**1.20 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 22 to the accounts.

**1.21 Government Grants**

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

**1.22 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 DoH 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.

**1.23 Charitable Trust Account Consolidation**

Northern Ireland Social Care Council held no charitable trust accounts at 31 March 2023 or 31 March 2022.

**1.24 Accounting Standards that have been issued but have not yet been adopted**

The International Accounting Standards Board have issued the following new standards, but which are either not yet effective or adopted. Under IAS 8 there is a requirement to disclose these standards together with an assessment of their initial impact on application.

**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023  
STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

IFRS 17 Insurance Contracts:

IFRS 17 Insurance Contracts will replace IFRS 4 Insurance Contracts and is effective for accounting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2023. In line with the requirements of the FReM, IFRS 17 will be implemented, as interpreted and adapted for the public sector, with effect from 1 April 2023.

Management currently assesses that there will be minimal impact on application to the Northern Ireland Social Care Council's consolidated financial statements.

**NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL  
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 March 2023**

**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

**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.

**NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL  
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 March 2023**

**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023  
NOTE 3 EXPENDITURE**

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Operating expenses are as follows: -</b>		
Staff costs: <sup>1</sup>		
Wages and salaries	2,477,808	2,393,798
Social security costs	237,011	216,554
Other pension costs	445,023	412,626
Revenue grants to voluntary organisations	547,513	404,521
Supplies and services – general	23,821	18,747
Establishment	462,569	548,067
Transport	-	-
Premises	410,235	332,470
Rentals under operating leases	286,774	315,918
*Miscellaneous	390,772	271,708
BSO services	263,986	244,726
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>5,545,512</b>	<b>5,159,135</b>
<b>Non-cash items</b>		
Depreciation	33,063	30,083
Amortisation	92,592	99,310
Impairments	-	-
(Profit) on disposal of property, plant and equipment (including land)	-	-
(Profit) on disposal of intangibles	-	-
Loss on disposal of property, plant and equipment (including land)	-	-
Loss on disposal of intangibles	-	-
Increase / Decrease in provisions (provision provided for in year less any release)	20,949	-
Cost of borrowing provisions (unwinding of discount on provisions)	-	-
Auditor's remuneration	31,500	29,750
<b>Total Non-cash items</b>	<b>178,104</b>	<b>159,143</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,723,616</b>	<b>5,318,278</b>

During the year the Northern Ireland Social Care Council purchased no non audit services from its external auditor (NIAO) (2021-22: £Nil)

\*In 2022-23, £359k of the miscellaneous expenditure relates to Social Care Reform and Social Work Promotion projects.

<sup>1</sup> Further detailed analysis of staff costs is located in the Staff Report on page 78 within the Accountability Report.

**NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL  
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 March 2023**

**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

**NOTE 4 INCOME**

**4.1 Revenue from Contracts with Customers**

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Other income from non-patient services	1,459,391	1,280,742
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>1,459,391</u></b>	<b><u>1,280,742</u></b>

**4.2 Other Operating Income**

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
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>1,459,391</u></b>	<b><u>1,280,742</u></b>



NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

NOTE 5.1 Property, plant and equipment - year ended 31 March 2023

	Land £	Buildings (excluding dwellings) £	Dwellings £	Assets under Construction £	Plant and Machinery (Equipment) £	Transport Equipment £	Information Technology (IT) £	Furniture and Fittings £	Total £
<b>Cost or Valuation</b>									
At 1 April 2022	-	-	-	-	6,410	-	211,652	-	218,062
Indexation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Additions	-	-	-	-	-	-	33,551	-	33,551
Donations / Government grant / Lottery Funding	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Reclassifications	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Transfers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Revaluation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Impairment charged to the SoCNE	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Impairment charged to revaluation reserve	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Reversal of impairments (indexn)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Disposals	-	-	-	-	-	-	(20,836)	-	(20,836)
At 31 March 2023	-	-	-	-	<b>6,410</b>	-	<b>224,367</b>	-	<b>230,777</b>

**Depreciation**

At 1 April 2022	-	-	-	-	6,410	-	132,249	-	138,659
Indexation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Reclassifications	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Transfers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Revaluation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Impairment charged to the SoCNE	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Impairment charged to the revaluation reserve	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Reversal of impairments (indexn)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Disposals	-	-	-	-	-	-	(20,836)	-	(20,836)
Provided during the year	-	-	-	-	-	-	33,063	-	33,063
At 31 March 2023	-	-	-	-	<b>6,410</b>	-	<b>144,476</b>	-	<b>150,886</b>

NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL  
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 March 2022

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

NOTE 5.1 (continued) Property, plant and equipment - year ended 31 March 2023

	Land £	Buildings (excluding dwellings) £	Dwellings £	Assets under Construction £	Plant and Machinery (Equipment) £	Transport Equipment £	Information Technology (IT) £	Furniture and Fittings £	Total £
Carrying Amount At 31 March 2023	-	-	-	-	-	-	79,891	-	79,891
At 31 March 2022	-	-	-	-	-	-	79,403	-	79,403

**Asset financing**

Owned	-	-	-	-	-	-	79,891	-	79,891
Finance leased	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
On B/S (SoFP) PFI and other service concession arrangements contracts	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Carrying Amount At 31 March 2023	-	-	-	-	-	-	79,891	-	79,891

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 (2021: £Nil).

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

	2023	2022
	£	£
Donations	-	-
Government Grant	-	-
Lottery Funding	-	-

NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL  
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 March 2022

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

NOTE 5.2 Property, plant and equipment - year ended 31 March 2022

Cost or Valuation	Land £	Buildings (excluding dwellings) £	Dwellings £	Assets under construction £	Plant and Machinery (Equipment) £	Transport Equipment £	Information Technology (IT) £	Furniture and Fittings £	Total £
At 1 April 2021	-	-	-	-	6,410	-	232,749	-	239,159
Indexation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Additions	-	-	-	-	-	-	27,812	-	27,812
Donations / Government grant / Lottery Funding	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Reclassifications	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Transfers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Revaluation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Impairment charged to the SoCNE	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Impairment charged to revaluation reserve	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Reversal of impairments (indexn)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Disposals	-	-	-	-	-	-	(48,909)	-	(48,909)
At 31 March 2022	-	-	-	-	6,410	-	211,652	-	218,062

Depreciation

At 1 April 2021	-	-	-	-	6,410	-	151,075	-	157,485
Indexation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Reclassifications	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Transfers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Revaluation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Impairment charged to the SoCNE	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Impairment charged to the revaluation reserve	-	-	-	-	-	-	(48,909)	-	(48,909)
Reversal of impairments (indexn)	-	-	-	-	-	-	30,083	-	30,083
Disposals	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Provided during the year	-	-	-	-	6,410	-	132,249	-	138,659
At 31 March 2022	-	-	-	-	6,410	-	132,249	-	138,659

NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL  
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 March 2022

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

NOTE 5.2 (continued) Property, Plant and Equipment- year ended 31 March 2022

	Land £	Buildings (excluding dwellings) £	Dwellings £	Assets under Construction £	Plant and Machinery (Equipment) £	Transport Equipment £	Information Technology (IT) £	Furniture and Fittings £	Total £
Carrying Amount At 31 March 2022	-	-	-	-	-	-	79,403	-	79,403
At 31 March 2021	-	-	-	-	-	-	81,674	-	81,674

**Asset financing**

Owned	-	-	-	-	-	-	79,403	-	79,403
Finance leased On SOFP PFI and other service concession arrangements contracts	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Carrying Amount</b> At 31 March 2022	-	-	-	-	-	-	79,403	-	79,403

**Asset financing**

Owned	-	-	-	-	-	-	81,674	-	81,674
Finance leased On SOFP PFI and other service concession arrangements contracts	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Carrying Amount</b> At 1 April 2021	-	-	-	-	-	-	81,674	-	81,674

NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL  
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 March 2023

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

NOTE 6.1 Intangible assets- year ended 31 March 2023

	Software Licenses £	Information Technology £	Websites £	Development Expenditure £	Licences, Trademarks and Artistic Originals £	Patents £	Goodwill £	Payments on Account and Assets under Construction £	Total £
<b>Cost or Valuation</b>									
At 1 April 2022	71,316	1,106,082	-	-	-	-	-	1	1,177,399
Indexation	1,458	31,963	-	-	-	-	-	-	33,421
Additions	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	354,863	354,863
Donations / Government grant / Lottery Funding	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Reclassifications	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Transfers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Revaluation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Impairment charged to the SoCNE	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Impairment charged to revaluation reserve	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Disposals	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
At 31 March 2023	<b>72,774</b>	<b>1,138,045</b>	-	-	-	-	-	<b>*354,864</b>	<b>1,565,683</b>

**Amortisation**

At 1 April 2022	56,899	861,917	-	-	-	-	-	-	918,816
Indexation	1,458	27,037	-	-	-	-	-	-	28,495
Reclassifications	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Transfers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Revaluation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Impairment charged to the SoCNE	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Impairment charged to the revaluation reserve	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Disposals	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Provided during the year	4,820	87,772	-	-	-	-	-	-	92,592
At 31 March 2023	<b>63,177</b>	<b>976,726</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	<b>1,039,903</b>

\*Payments on account and assets under construction projects include: James House ICT, Registration Mobile App, Fitness to Practise Case Management System.

NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL  
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 March 2023

NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

NOTE 6.1 (continued) Intangible assets - year ended 31 March 2023

Software Licences £	Information Technology £	Websites £	Development Expenditure £	Licences, Trademarks and Artistic Originals £	Patents £	Goodwill £	Payments on Account and Assets under Construction £	Total £
<b>9,597</b>	<b>161,319</b>	-	-	-	-	-	<b>354,864</b>	<b>525,780</b>
14,417	244,165	-	-	-	-	-	1	258,583

**Carrying Amount**

At 31 March 2023

At 31 March 2022

**Asset financing**

Owned

Finance leased

On B/S (SoFP) PFI and other service concession arrangements contracts

9,597	161,319	-	-	-	-	-	354,864	525,780
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>9,597</b>	<b>161,319</b>	-	-	-	-	-	<b>354,864</b>	<b>525,780</b>

**Carrying Amount**

At 31 March 2023

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:

	2023	2022
	£	£
Donations	-	-
Government Grant	-	-
Lottery Funding	-	-

**NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL  
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 March 2023  
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

**NOTE 6.2 Intangible assets - year ended 31 March 2022**

	Software Licenses £	Information Technology £	Websites £	Development Expenditure £	Licences, Trademarks and Artistic Originals £	Patents £	Goodwill £	Payments on Account and Assets under Construction £	Total £
<b>Cost or Valuation</b>									
At 1 April 2021	59,944	1,119,841	-	-	-	-	-	1	1,179,786
Indexation	(627)	(13,759)	-	-	-	-	-	-	(14,386)
Additions	11,999	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11,999
Donations / Government grant / Lottery Funding	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Reclassifications	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Transfers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Revaluation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Impairment charged to the SoCNE	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Impairment charged to revaluation reserve	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Disposals	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
At 31 March 2022	<b>71,316</b>	<b>1,106,082</b>	-	-	-	-	-	<b>1</b>	<b>1,177,399</b>

**Amortisation**

At 1 April 2021	54,886	775,942	-	-	-	-	-	-	830,828
Indexation	(627)	(10,695)	-	-	-	-	-	-	(11,322)
Reclassifications	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Transfers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Revaluation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Impairment charged to the SoCNE	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Impairment charged to the revaluation reserve	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Disposals	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Provided during the year	2,640	96,670	-	-	-	-	-	-	99,310
At 31 March 2022	<b>56,899</b>	<b>861,917</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	<b>918,816</b>

NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL  
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 March 2023

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

NOTE 6.2 Intangible assets - year ended 31 March 2022

Software Licenses £	Information Technology £	Websites £	Development Expenditure £	Licences, Trademarks and Artistic Originals £	Patents £	Goodwill £	Payments on Account and Assets under Construction £	Total £
14,417	244,165	-	-	-	-	-	1	258,583
5,058	343,899	-	-	-	-	-	1	348,958

**Carrying Amount**

At 31 March 2022

At 31 March 2021

**Asset financing**

Owned

Finance leased

On B/S (SoFP) PFI and other service concession arrangements contracts

14,417	244,165	-	-	-	-	-	1	258,583
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
14,417	244,165	-	-	-	-	-	1	258,583

**Carrying Amount**

At 31 March 2022

**Asset financing**

Owned

Finance leased

On B/S (SoFP) PFI and other service concession arrangements contracts

5,058	343,899	-	-	-	-	-	1	348,958
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5,058	343,899	-	-	-	-	-	1	348,958

**Carrying Amount**

At 1 April 2021



**NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL  
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 March 2023**

**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

**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 2023 or 31 March 2022.

**NOTE 9 IMPAIRMENTS**

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council had no impairments at either 31 March 2023 or 31 March 2022.

**NOTE 10 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 2023 or 31 March 2022.

**NOTE 11 INVENTORIES**

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council did not hold any goods for resale at either 31 March 2023 or 31 March 2022.

NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL  
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 March 2023

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

NOTE 12 CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Balance at 1 April	141,766	92,558
Net change in cash and cash equivalents	15,633	49,208
<b>Balance at 31 March</b>	<b>157,399</b>	<b>141,766</b>

<b>The following balances at 31 March were held at</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Commercial Banks and cash in hand	157,399	141,766
<b>Balance at 31 March</b>	<b>157,399</b>	<b>141,766</b>

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

NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL  
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 March 2023

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

NOTE 13 TRADE RECEIVABLES, FINANCIAL AND OTHER ASSETS

	2023 £	2022 £
<b>Amounts falling due within one year</b>		
Trade receivables	41,860	14,799
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>41,860</u>	<u>14,799</u>
Prepayments	18,294	74,985
Accrued income	-	-
Current part of PFI and other service concession arrangements prepayment	-	-
<b>Other current assets</b>	<u>18,294</u>	<u>74,985</u>
Carbon reduction commitment	-	-
<b>Intangible current assets</b>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</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><u>41,860</u></u>	<u><u>14,799</u></u>
<b>TOTAL OTHER CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<u><u>18,294</u></u>	<u><u>74,985</u></u>
<b>TOTAL INTANGIBLE CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>
<b>TOTAL RECEIVABLES AND OTHER CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<u><u>60,154</u></u>	<u><u>89,784</u></u>

The balances are net of a provision for bad debts of £Nil (2021/22: £Nil).

**NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL  
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 March 2023**

**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

**NOTE 14 TRADE PAYABLES AND OTHER CURRENT LIABILITIES**

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<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	40,491	271,581
Payroll payables	156,131	93,721
Clinical Negligence payables	-	-
RPA payables	-	-
BSO payables	-	-
Other payables	25	342
Accruals	996,863	*727,594
Accruals– relating to property, plant and equipment	69,900	-
Accruals – relating to intangibles	3,968	-
Deferred income	465,396	369,617
<b>Trade and other payables</b>	<b>1,732,774</b>	<b>1,462,855</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>1,732,774</b>	<b>1,462,855</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>1,732,774</b>	<b>1,462,855</b>

\*£20,933 ref PSNI holiday pay accrual was recorded as an accrual in 2021-22. This is being treated as a provision in 2022-23.

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH  
 2023

NOTE 15 PROVISIONS FOR LIABILITIES AND CHARGES

	Pensions relating to former directors £	Pensions relating to other staff £	Clinical Negligence £	Other £	2023 £	2022 £
<b>Balance at 1 April 2022</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-
Provided in year	-	-	-	20,949	20,949	-
(Provisions not required written back)	-	-	-	-	-	-
(Provisions utilised in the year)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Borrowing costs (unwinding of discount)	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>At 31 March 2023</b>	-	-	-	<b>20,949</b>	<b>20,949</b>	-

<b>Comprehensive Net Expenditure Account Charges</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Arising during the year	20,949	-
Reversed unused	-	-
Cost of borrowing (unwinding of discount)	-	-
<b>Total charge within Operating costs</b>	<b>20,949</b>	<b>-</b>

**NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL  
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 March 2023**

**NOTE 15 PROVISIONS FOR LIABILITIES AND CHARGES continued**

**Analysis of expected timing of discounted flows as at 31 March 2023**

	Pensions relating to former directors	Pensions relating to other staff	Clinical Negligence	Other	2023	2022
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Not later than one year	-	-	-	-	-	-
Later than one year and not later than five years	-	-	-	20,949	20,949	-
Later than five years	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>At 31 March</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>20,949</b>	<b>20,949</b>	<b>-</b>

A provision has been made for the potential liability surrounding Holiday Pay. An estimate has been made of an appropriate level of provision on the basis of the duration of the claims and the application of a regionally agreed estimated payment percentage of the total expenditure incurred on affected allowances. The total is estimated as £20,949 for NISCC.

The Court of Appeal (CoA) judgment from 17 June 2019 (PSNI v Agnew) determined that claims for Holiday Pay shortfall can be taken back to 1998. The PSNI appealed the CoA judgment to the Supreme Court and while the hearing concluded on 15 December 2022, the date has not yet been set for the hand down of the judgement. The HSC working group considering resolution of the liability has indicated that any solution will be more than 12 months away as it will require system change. In light of industrial action, there is also no indication of when Trade Unions discussions re settlement of the historic liability can be conducted and in the absence of a Minister, agreeing a settlement may also be delayed. As a result of this the level of uncertainty around the timing of the liability has increased and whilst it was recorded as an accrual in the prior year, it has been treated as a provision at 31 March 2023. The best estimate of the value of the liability is based on the position in the NHS in England, Scotland and Wales.

**NOTE 16 CAPITAL COMMITMENTS**

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council had no capital commitments at either 31 March 2023 or 31 March 2022.

**NOTE 17 COMMITMENTS UNDER LEASES**

**17.1 Operating Leases**

The Social Care Council moved premises to James House on 6 February 2023 as part of the Belfast Optimisation Project. The new premises operates under a 5 year licence (the previous accommodation was provided for under a lease agreement) and has enabled significant savings in accommodation related costs.

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

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<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	-	131,300
Later than one year but not later than five years	-	-
Later than five years	-	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	-	<b>131,300</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 2023 or 31 March 2022.

## **NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

### **17.3 Operating Leases**

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council did not issue any operating leases at either 31 March 2023 or 31 March 2022.

## **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 2023 or 31 March 2022.

## **NOTE 19 OTHER FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS**

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council did not have any other financial commitments at 31 March 2023 or 31 March 2022.

## **NOTE 20 CONTINGENT LIABILITIES**

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council did not have any quantifiable contingent liabilities at 31 March 2023 or 31 March 2022.

### **Unquantifiable Contingent Liabilities**

#### **Holiday Pay Liability**

The Court of Appeal (CoA) judgment from 17 June 2019 (PSNI v Agnew) determined that claims for Holiday Pay shortfall can be taken back to 1998. The PSNI appealed the CoA judgment to the Supreme Court and while the hearing concluded on 15 December 2022, the date has not yet been set for the hand down of the judgement. A provision has been calculated by HSC management for the liability at 31 March 2023, based on the position in the NHS in England, Scotland and Wales, and is included in these accounts. However, the extent to which the liability may exceed this amount remains uncertain as the calculation will rely on the outstanding Supreme Court judgement and will have to be agreed with Trade Unions. The potential additional financial effect of this is unquantifiable at present.

### **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 2023 or 31 March 2022.



**NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL  
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 March 2023**

**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 arm's 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 have 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 2023 or 31 March 2022 belonging to third parties.

**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

**NOTE 23 FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE TARGETS**

NISCC is allocated a Revenue Resource Limit (RRL) and a Capital Resource Limit (CRL) and must contain spending within these limits. The resource limits for a body may be a combination of agreed funding allocated by commissioners, the Department of Health, other Departmental bodies or other departments. Bodies are required to report on any variation from the limit as set which is a financial target to be achieved and not part of the accounting systems. Following the implementation of review of Financial Process, the format of Financial Performance Targets has changed as the Department has introduced budget control limits for depreciation, impairments, and provisions, which an Arm's Length Body cannot exceed. In 2022-23 NISCC has remained within the budget control limit it was issued. From 2022-23 onwards, the materiality threshold limit excludes non-cash RRL. NISCC has also remained within the 2021-22 restated materiality threshold limit.

**23.1 Revenue Resource Limit**

**NISCC is given a Revenue Resource Limit which it is not permitted to overspend.**

The Revenue Resource Limit for NISCC is calculated as follows:

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>Total</b>
		<b>(Restated)</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Revenue Resource Limit (RRL)</b>		
RRL Allocated From:		
DoH (SPPG)	4,095,858	3,885,406
DoH (Other, excludes non cash)	-	-
PHA	-	-
Other – SUMDE & NIMDTA	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,095,858</b>	<b>3,885,406</b>
<b>Less RRL Issued To:</b>		
RRL Issued	-	-
<b>RRL to be Accounted For</b>	<b>4,095,858</b>	<b>3,885,406</b>
<b>Revenue Resource Limit Expenditure</b>		
Net Expenditure per SoCNE	<b>4,264,225</b>	<b>4,037,536</b>
<b>Adjustments</b>		
Capital Grants	-	-
Research and Development under ESA10	-	-
Depreciation/ Amortisation	(125,655)	(129,393)
Impairments	-	-
Notional Charges	(31,500)	(29,750)
Movements in Provisions	(20,949)	-
PPE Stock Adjustment	-	-
PFI and other service concession arrangements/ IFRIC	-	-
Profit/(loss) on disposal of fixed asset	-	-
Other (specify)	-	-
<b>Total Adjustments</b>	<b>(178,104)</b>	<b>(159,143)</b>
<b>Net Expenditure Funded from RRL</b>	<b>4,086,121</b>	<b>3,878,393</b>

**NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL  
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 March 2023**

Surplus/ (Deficit) against RRL	9,737	7,013
Break Even cumulative position (opening)	168,077	161,064
Break Even cumulative position (closing)	<b>177,814</b>	<b>168,077</b>

**Materiality Test:**

NISCC is required to ensure that it breaks even on an annual basis by containing its net expenditure to within 0.25% of RRL limits or £20k, whichever is greater.

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	%	(Restated) %
Break Even in year position as % of RRL	0.24	0.18
Break Even cumulative position as % of RRL	4.34	4.33

**23.2 Capital Resource Limit**

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

	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Gross capital expenditure by the Social Care Council (Receipts from sales of fixed assets)	388,414	39,811
Net capital expenditure	-	-
Capital Resource Limit	388,414	39,811
Adjustment for Research and Development under ESA10	388,596	39,847
	-	-
<b>Overspend/(Underspend) against CRL</b>	<b>(182)</b>	<b>(36)</b>

**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

**NOTE 24 EVENTS AFTER THE REPORTING PERIOD**

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

**Date of authorisation for issue**

The Accounting Officer authorised these financial statements for issue on 9 August 2023

# Northern Ireland Social Care Council Board Membership – 2022-23



**Chair, Paul Martin**



**Sarah Browne**



**Roslyn Dougherty**



**Gerard Guckian**



**David Hayes**



**Brenda Maitland**  
Term ended 31/12/22



**Jacqueline McGarvey**



**Catherine McPhillips**  
Term ended 2/2/23

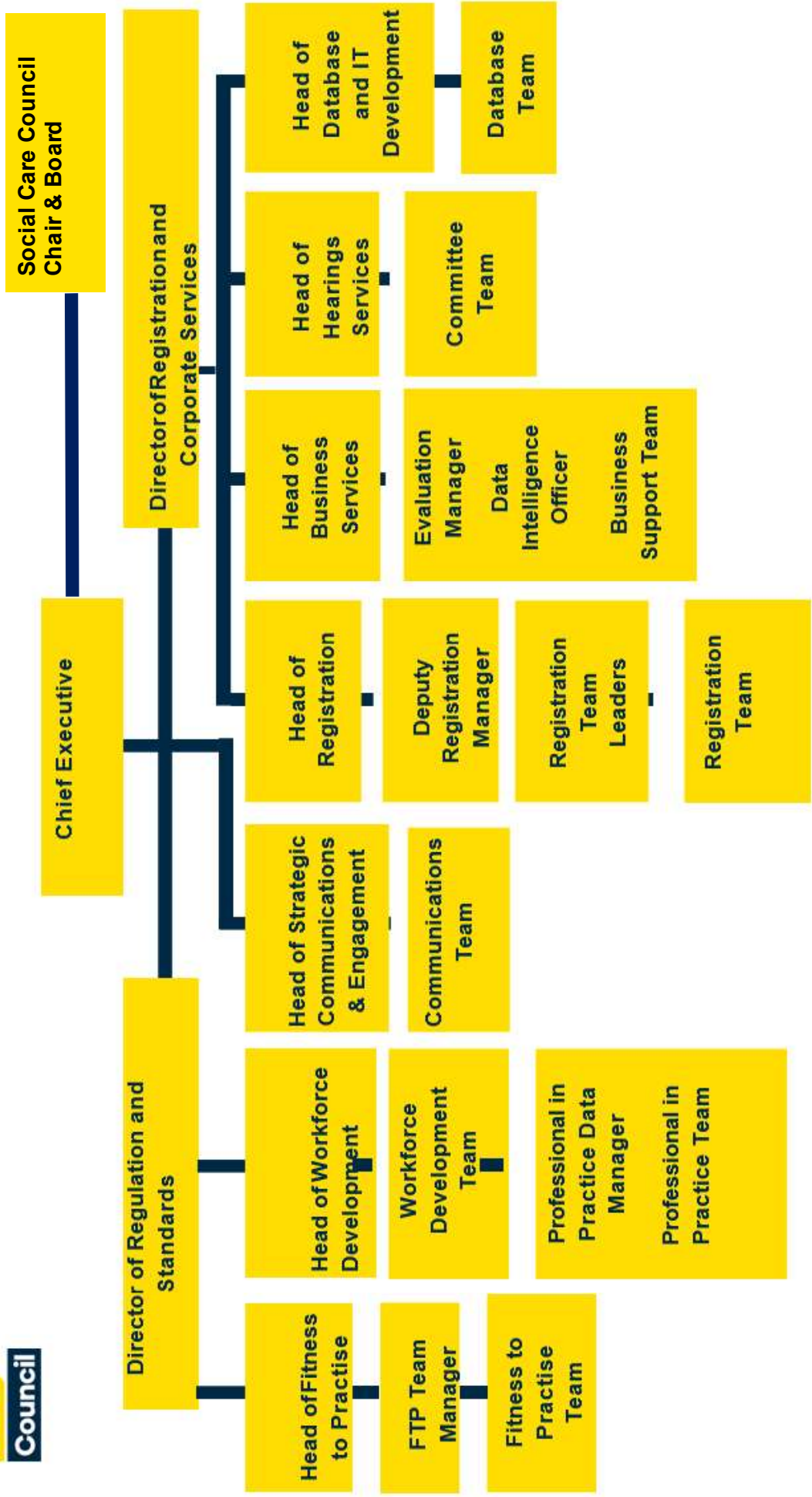


**Anne O'Reilly**



**Lee Wilson**  
Term ended 30/11/22

# Northern Ireland Social Care Council Organisational Chart at 31 March 2023



## Northern Ireland Social Care Council Risk Appetite 2022-23

As noted in the Governance Report, registers of risks are maintained to ensure that business is delivered safely and effectively. The Risk Appetite Statement sets out the level of risk with which the Social Care Council aims to operate. The Council recognises that it may not always be possible, and not financially affordable, to fully remove uncertainty from a decision and that decisions should be made using the best available information and expertise. When decisions need to be made urgently, the information relied upon and the considerations applied to it should be retained; and the risk culture must embrace openness, support transparency, welcome constructive challenge and promote collaboration, consultation and co-operation.

### Risk Appetite Statement

The table below, outlines the Risk Appetite across the key areas of Finance, Compliance, Safety, Service Delivery and Reputation.

Area	Statement	Risk Appetite
<b>Finance</b>	The organisation must comply with the statutory duty to breakeven and therefore must be protected from adverse impact from risks which threaten its financial breakeven position.	Cautious
<b>Compliance</b>	The organisation must be averse to risks that could impact upon its compliance with law and regulation, but should be prepared to accept moderate risk in order to achieve its objectives in relation to raising the profile of the social work and social care workforce and sector leadership.	Cautious → Moderate
<b>Safety</b>	The organisation must be averse to risks that could threaten the safety of users, carers, registrants and staff while recognising that the organisation should be prepared to accept a more open approach to safety risk when pursuing objectives associated with development of the workforce, communication and engagement and sector leadership.	Cautious → Open
<b>Service Delivery</b>	Delivery of the organisations core statutory services must be protected, however having an open to hungry approach to risk will help deliver substantial benefits to service users, registrants, employers and the wider social work and social care sector.	Open → Hungry
<b>Reputation</b>	Damage to the organisations reputation can undermine stakeholder confidence however the organisation is prepared to accept a moderate to hungry impact on its reputation as delivery of objectives will provide significant longer term benefit.	Moderate → Hungry

## Risk Appetite Matrix

The matrix below, outlines the Risk Appetite in each of the key areas of Finance, Compliance, Safety, Service Delivery and Reputational for each of the Strategic Themes set out in the 2021-22 Business Plan.

Strategic Theme	Financial <i>(Impacts on the financial position and sustainability of the Social Care Council)</i>	Compliance <i>(Impacts on the Social Care Council's conformance with legal obligations and stat. duties and its compliance with regulatory requirements)</i>	Safety <i>(Impacts on the safety and wellbeing of staff, registrants, service users, partners/stakeholders and the public)</i>	Service Delivery <i>(Impacts on the intended/expected delivery of the Social Care Council's services)</i>	Reputational <i>(Impacts on the Social Care Council's reputation amongst all or some of its stakeholders)</i>
1. To put <b>standards</b> at the heart of social work and social care practice and education and training, so as to support the delivery of effective social care services both now and in the future.	CAUTIOUS	CAUTIOUS	CAUTIOUS	OPEN	MODERATE
2. To ensure that <b>regulation</b> is robust, agile, valued and trusted in order to support good social work and social care practice.	CAUTIOUS	CAUTIOUS	CAUTIOUS	OPEN	MODERATE
3. To support the <b>development of the social work and social care workforce</b> in order that they are able to deliver safe, effective, value led care.	CAUTIOUS	MODERATE	MODERATE	OPEN	OPEN
4. To promote a <b>systems leadership</b> approach that contributes to capacity building that supports leadership at all levels.	CAUTIOUS	MODERATE	OPEN	HUNGRY	HUNGRY
5. To ensure there is effective and meaningful <b>communication and engagement</b> so as to improve the understanding of what the Social Care Council does and the value of the social work and social care workforce.	MODERATE	OPEN	OPEN	HUNGRY	HUNGRY



[www.niscc.info](http://www.niscc.info)