

Title: Northern Ireland Social Care Council – Draft Business Plan 2024-25.

Date: 17 April 2024

Presented by: Declan McAllister, Director of Registration and Corporate Services

ACTION REQUIRED

This Paper is	For Review (and approval)
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SUMMARY

The Social Care Council Strategic Plan is for a period of four years (2023/24 – 2026/27) was launched last year. The Social Care Council produce an annual Business Plan to support the Strategic Plan and this is the second Business Plan to help us deliver on our strategic themes and outcomes.

The draft Business Plan [Appendix I] for 2024/25 has been developed following engagement with staff, managers and our partnerships. In developing the Business Plan, we have been mindful of the financial constraints and pressures together with anticipated further pressures on our budget going forward.

We are also in the process of developing a People Plan which may assist in identifying and evidencing the issues being faced across functions in continuing to deliver high quality services on a lean basis.

The Business Plan for 2024/25 therefore tries to balance the ambitions to develop and do more (with investment in technology and new areas of work including the research and evidence piece which is now part of the organisation's portfolio) – and the need to always ensure we are delivering all of our statutory functions to a high level of quality assurance.

The Business Plan has also been equality screened [**Appendix II**] alongside an overview of identified areas for equality screening throughout the year [**Appendix III**].

Given the timing of the Business Plan – we are also keen to hear directly from Board members ahead of the Board meeting if you have any initial comments or feedback that you wish to share in advance.

BACKGROUND

The Board approved a new Strategic Plan for 2023-24 to 2026-27 in March 2023. The new Strategic Plan is developed over four strategic themes:

- Delivering effective regulation.
- Developing the capability of the workforce.
- Leading with influence.
- Innovating and improving.

The Strategic Plan is outcomes based – the difference we want to make; and will be supported by an annual Business Plan. We will report on progress on our achievements and the difference we have made through our Annual Report.

This draft Business Plan is the second Business Plan to support our overarching Strategic Plan.

KEY ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Process

- The draft Business Plan will be formatted and reviewed (including for any typos/grammar/plain language) and presented in a final designed form once the content is approved by the Board.
- A copy of the draft Business Plan has been shared with the Department of Health.
- It is planned to have a final (approved) version for sharing with the Board, staff and stakeholders (on our website) by end April 2024.
- The draft Business Plan has been equality screened [Appendix II] and an overview of screening developed [Appendix III].
- The Business Plan will be underpinned by organisational team goals (this will be the new basis for our operational plan) and associated work plans. Progress on the team goals will be reviewed by the Operational Leadership Team (OLT) and at team meetings.

Content

- Since the development of the Strategic Plan, the organisation has taken on responsibility for the Leadership in Social Work Framework and the Social Work and Social Care Research Strategy. This was not accounted for in the Strategic Plan, and therefore some small edits have been made to the strategic objectives to ensure we have a clear line of sight for this work which we will now start to capture in our Business Plans.
- We have placed renewed focus on our statutory functions – following feedback from Registration, Fitness to Practise, Committee and Workforce Development that the scope and impact of their work needed to be better reflected in our Business Plan.

- We have reviewed what we achieved in 2023/24 – and carried over any ongoing work or where the outcome of a project or deliverable in 2023/24 extended into the new business year.
- We have captured new developments including the scoping of a new Registration and CPD system – and the development of a new App for registrants which we plan to launch in June.
- We are also working on State of the Nation report (our first one) which we will share with the Board during 2024/25.
- We have engaged a company to support us with the development of a People Plan and all teams will be connected and consulted as part of this work – this will help us identify what is needed to sustain our business both now and in the future.
- As you will be aware we plan to put two new forums in place to replace the Registrants Forum (one with a focus on social and the other on social care).
- We are also starting to build our work to support Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and will be sharing this work with the Board over the cycle of this Business Plan.
- We will continue with all our promotion and awareness campaigns across social work and social care, and the Degree – including finalising our Engagement Strategy.

We appreciate that the Board will need time to review the draft and we are therefore seeking comments before the Board meeting, in addition to any at the Board meeting on the 24th April.

ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATION

Staff and partnerships have been engaged on the draft Business Plan and the Plan has also been equality screened [Appendix II and III].

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Board review the draft Business Plan for comments and approval [**Appendix I**] and consider the Equality Screening [**Appendix II and III**].

ATTACHED DOCUMENTS AND/OR LINKS HERE

Appendix I – Draft Business Plan 2024-25

Appendix II – Equality Screening

Appendix III – Overview of screening for 2024-25