

Research and Evidence Partnership

28 May 2026, 2pm – 4.30pm

Council Suites 1&2, James House

Confirmed Minutes

Attendees

Colin Reid (CR) Chair
 Helen McVicker (HMcv)
 Anne McGlade (AMcG)
 Annie McAnallen (AMcA)
 Barbara Campbell (BC)
 Prof. Davy Hayes (DH)
 Joanne Sansome (JS)
 Kate Havern (KH)
 Lisa Morrison (LM)
 Louise Dunlop (LD)
 Mark Tully (MT)
 Susan Ritchie (SR)
 Marie Louise Sloan
 Andre McKeown (Note taker)

NI Social Care Council Board
 NI Social Care Council
 NI Social Care Council
 Probation Board NI
 IMPACT
 Queens University of Belfast
 Person with lived experience
 South Eastern Health & Social Care Trust
 Person with Lived Experience
 UK Committee on Research Integrity
 NI Public Health Research Network
 Department of Health
 South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust
 NI Social Care Council

Apologies

Dr Aideen Maguire (AM)
 Janet Diffin
 Prof Bernie Kelly
 Prof. Brian Taylor (BT)
 Carol Diffin
 Dr Jennifer Hamilton (JH)
 Jonathan Jackson (JJ)
 Prof. Karen Winter (KW)
 Kelvin Doherty (KD)
 Kerry Cuskelly (KC)
 Prof. Paula McFadden (PMcF)
 Sonia Patton (SP)
 Tom Cassidy (TC)
 Johnny Turnbull (JT)
 Emily Wilson (EW)
 Marita Magennis (MM)
 Tracy Reid

Administrative Data Research Centre UK
 R and D office, Public Health Agency
 Queens University
 Research Advocate
 NI Social Care Council Board
 Ulster University
 NI Clinical Research Network
 Queens University
 Youth Justice Agency
 All Ireland Social Work Research Consortium
 Ulster University
 Person with lived experience
 Executive Directors of Social Work
 Cedar Foundation
 Person with lived experience and Carer
 Southern Health and Social Care Trust
 NI Social Care Council

Not in attendance

Dr Amanda Shields (AS)	Open University
Prof. Ann-Marie Gray (AMG)	Ulster University
Catherine Cassidy (CC)	Strategic Planning and Performance Group
Elaine Armstrong (EA)	Cedar Foundation
Frances Lyons (FL)	National Children's Bureau
Majella McCloskey (MMcC)	Centre for Effective Services
Marc Harvey (MH)	Northern Health and Social Care Trust
Prof Mike Clarke (MC)	Queens University
Paul Webb (PW)	Praxis Care
Pauline Shepherd (PS)	Independent Health and Care Providers
Peter Beck (PB)	Probation Board
Rhonda Campbell (RC)	R and D Office, Public Health Agency

Please note: Co-pilot was used to help produce these minutes

No.	Agenda Item	Action	Actioned by
1.	Welcome and apologies		
	HMcv welcomed all members, with a particular welcome to Colin Reid as the new Chair. Introductions were taken around the table, including new members and replacements for previous representatives. The Chair acknowledged the breadth of experience across regulation, trusts, academia, probation, lived experience, and research and noted that this is the strength of the partnership.		HMcv/CR
2.	Previous minutes for approval		
	Minutes from December 2025 were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting. It was noted that the February 2026 meeting had been replaced with a research strategy workshop.	To be signed by the Chair and uploaded on website.	AA
3.	Matters arising		
3.1	The need for a Deputy Chair was acknowledged, particularly to provide resilience and continuity. It was agreed to defer a decision until the next meeting, allowing the new Chair time to settle into the role. Members were supportive of progressing this at the next meeting.	Request for member to act as Deputy Chair.	CR/HMcv
3.2	The Terms of Reference currently on the website were confirmed as the most up-to-date version,	To ensure that final version is	AMcK

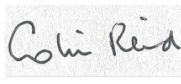
	though marked as draft. To update version on the website as final. It was agreed they should remain live and subject to review, particularly as the research strategy implementation progresses and new issues emerge. <i>Any other matters arising are included as agenda items for discussion at this meeting.</i>	uploaded on the website.	
4.	Priority setting exercise		
4.1	AMcG shared a brief update of the progress on priority setting exercise, highlighting key messages as below • A working group (7–8 members) has been established following the December meeting to progress priority setting. • Key developments since the last meeting: ○ Meeting held on 13 March 2026. ○ Engagement with R&D colleagues, Janet Diffin and Alan McMichael, to explore approaches such as the James Lind Alliance (JLA) methodology. ○ Meeting with Department of Health policy colleagues, Eilish McDaniel. There will be engagement with reform leads in due course. A discussion on a possible approach took place and members suggestions as noted below; • Full James Lind Alliance processes were considered not feasible due to capacity and funding constraints. • Alternative, proportionate approaches were discussed, including: ○ Use of external facilitation expertise. A meeting with Katherine Cowan, previously involved with JLA, is scheduled in June. ○ A mixed-method approach combining: ▪ Alignment with the social care reform agenda (adult and children’s services). ▪ Stakeholder engagement events. ▪ Surveys to widen participation. ▪ Consensus-building workshops to finalise priorities. • Strong emphasis was placed on the value of the process itself, not just the final list of priorities,		

	but also in building relationships and collaboration across sectors. Next steps were agreed as follows: • Further scoping and refinement of the proposed methodology. • Continue informal engagement with reform leads. • Target to begin the priority-setting process from September 2026, following completion of the research strategy consultation. • Members invited to contribute expertise, networks, or if feasible, to commit time to support the process.	Progress next steps	AMcg/HMcV/DH
5.	Research Strategy update		
	AMcG shared a brief update on the Research Strategy as below; • The draft Research Strategy is published and is currently out for public consultation until the 22 July 2026. • This have been broadly shared, including all registrants and other partnerships. • There are 91 responses so far. • Positive feedback was noted on clarity and accessibility of the document. • Members were asked to share the consultation within their own networks and teams. That would help reach groups that may not typically engage with formal consultations. Next steps: • Analysis of the survey and further update will be shared to all members by August. • Updated strategy will be brought back to the Partnership for sign-off (likely at September meeting).	Members to share consultation Undertake analysis	All AMcG
6.	Partnership membership review		
	HMcV noted that since the Partnership's establishment in September 2023, there has been an established membership regularly engaged with the meetings and workshops. However some members have not been able to engage with scheduled meetings.	Approach members who have not been able to engage	CR/HMcV/AMcG

	It was agreed to undertake a membership review through the following steps: • Contacting inactive members respectfully to ascertain whether they have capacity to engage / have an ongoing interest in the work of the partnership. • Following the initial review, explore alternative nominations to address any gaps in representation if required.		
7.	Any other business		
7.1	Annual research conference March 2026		
	AMcG shared a brief update from the outcomes of the Annual Research conference that took place in March 2026 at Riddel Hall highlighting key messages as below: • The conference was reported as high quality and well received. • Strong representation from practitioners, academics, and people with lived experience. • A conference report is available on the NISCC website: https://niscc.info/research-and-evidence-conference-report-2026/ • Early planning and engagement has begun for the 2027 conference.	Members to share report with others	All
7.2	ESWRA conference Aberdeen April 2026		
	AMcG shared her experience and the importance in participating in events like the European Social Work conference highlighting key messages as below; • Strong sense of Northern Ireland practitioners and academics representation and lived experience. • Recognition that, despite limited resources, the attendance from Northern Ireland facilitated strong emphasis on research areas like: ○ Practitioner involvement ○ Research engagement ○ Lived experience participation. • Encouraged applications and better communicate accessibility and funding opportunities to attend upcoming conference. Next conference will take place in Bucharest on 5th to 7th May 2027. LM, shared her experience in attending this conference from a person with lived experience, as		

	a presenter. She said that the conference was an eye-opener and she highlighted that Northern Ireland is leading in progressive practice models, showcasing the: • Continuing Professional Development (CPD) • Practitioner involvement in research; and • Inclusion of people with lived experience.		
7.3	Links with alliances across nations		
	• Ongoing engagement with four/five-nations regulatory and research alliances. • These links provide opportunities to: ○ Share learning. ○ Profile Northern Ireland's research agenda including our PhD subcommittee. ○ Influence wider UK and cross-national discussions.		
8.	Acknowledgements to Prof Davy Hayes		
	Members thanked Davy for Chairing the Partnership since September 2023 and his was acknowledged for his contribution to establishing the group and guiding its early development.		
9.	Dates for next meetings		
	• Tuesday 8 September 2026, 2:00pm - Online • Wednesday 10 February 2027, 2.00pm - Online • Tuesday 25 May 2027, 2:00pm - Social Care Council, James House	Invites have been sent out to all members	AA

Name: Colin Reid

Signature: 

Date of approval: 08/09/2026

Actions from 28 May 2026			
Agenda item	Action	By whom	Open/Close
3.1.	To seek nominations for a Deputy Chair	Chair/ HMcv	Open
2.	To sign approved minutes from previous meeting and upload on website.	Chair/ AA	Closed
3.2	To upload the final version of Terms of Reference on the website.	AMcK	Closed
4.	To follow updates after the meeting with Katherine Cowan re priority settings progress	AMcG/HMcV/DH	Open

6.	Membership review	Chair/ HMcV/ AMcG	Open
----	-------------------	----------------------	------