

Participation Partnership



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Approved by Social Care Council Board: 13th December 2024



1. REMIT AND CONSTITUTION

The Participation Partnership has been established by the Northern Ireland Social Care Council (Social Care Council) Board and is a subcommittee of the board. In line with its core value of Partnership the Social Care Council is taking forward and further developing the User and Carer Participation and Engagement agenda which is related to the fulfilment of its statutory functions. The Participation Partnership is one of four partnerships of the Board of Council and is chaired by a non-executive member of the Council and two co-chairs from the service user and carer membership.

2. PURPOSE AND ROLE

2.1. The purpose of the Partnership is to:



- a) Improve participation and engagement with service users and carers in line with the principals of Co-production which includes sharing their knowledge, expertise and lived experience to support the work of the Social Care Council.
- b) Support the Social Care Council to raise practice standards of registrants working in Social Work and Social Care.
- c) Provide influence, challenge, support, inspiration and contribute to the engagement work of the Social Care Council.
- d) Continue to support and develop the Service User and Carer members of the Participation Partnership.

3. AIMS AND RESPONSIBILITIES



The following aims and responsibilities fall within the remit of the Partnership:

	3.1. Ensure that Users and Carers are consulted and regularly involved in the Social Care Council's planning processes to include the Council's Strategic Plan, Annual Business Plan and Engagement Strategy.
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	3.2. Provide objective assurance to the Board that there are adequate arrangements in place to promote the efficient and effective engagement of users and carers in the work of the Social Care Council.
	3.3. Discuss the progress of Service user and Carer engagement activities through the review of the Participation Work Plan and evaluation of the impacts of involvement activity at each meeting.
	3.4. Oversee the Social Care Council's strategic policy on Personal and Public Involvement including carer and user feedback and recommend any User and Carer engagement and participation policies on behalf of the organisation to the Council for approval
	3.5. Ensure an adequate induction programme and ongoing training & development opportunities are available for each member of the Partnership.
	3.6. Report to Council immediately if there is any internal failing in systems, or risk to the processes associated with User and Carer participation including recommendations and remedial action taken or proposed
	3.7. Ensure the work of the Partnership is included as part of the rolling three year audit plan
	3.8. Complete a review of the Partnership Terms of Reference every 2 years and recommend to Council for approval.
	3.9. Have oversight of any other matters that pertains to user and carer participation and engagement.

4. COMPOSITION OF THE PARTNERSHIP

The Partnership is chaired by a Non-Executive Director of Council and two co-chairs selected from the service user and carer membership. The Partnership is composed of no more than two Non-executive Directors, the Director of Registration and Corporate Services, a Professional Adviser and a minimum of 3 service users and 3 carers.

The quorum for the Partnership is one Non-executive, one Social Care Council Attendee and 2 participants from the Users and Carers membership.

The terms of office for the two voluntary Co-Chairs shall be two years from date of appointment with an option of a two year extension should it be acceptable to both the member and the Partnership.

5. CONDUCT OF BUSINESS

Attendance

The Director of Registration and Corporate Services and/or the Nominated Professional Adviser to the Partnership, or their deputies, would be required to be in attendance at all meetings of the Participation Partnership. The Director of Registration and Corporate Services will provide support to the Partnership and, in particular, provide advice and guidance to the Chair and Co-chairs.

Duties include:

- Agreement of agenda, minutes and meetings with the chair and co-chairs;
- Collation and distribution of papers 7 days in advance of the meeting;
- Drafting the annual Partnership review report in consultation with members of the Partnership for inclusion in the Annual Report;
- Maintaining an oversight of matters arising from meetings.

The Chief Executive shall ensure secretariat facilities are provided for the Participation Partnership.

Frequency of Meetings

The Partnership shall meet at least four times a year to coincide with key Board Meeting dates for reporting purposes. The Partnership shall meet more frequently if considered necessary by the Chair and co-chairs in order to effectively discharge the execution of important business.

Proceedings

In accordance with Council practice and the ethos enshrined within the Councils 'Standing Orders', decisions of the Partnership will normally be arrived at through discussion and consensus rather than by voting on a show of hands. Where votes are taken, the Chair and Co-chairs will have the casting vote in the event of a tie.

Members absent from a particular meeting are expected to abide by agreed decisions of the Partnership, although they shall have a right to query the agreed decisions at the next meeting at which they are present .

Unless majority decisions or specific objections are recorded in the minutes, Members shall be jointly responsible for decisions made at Partnership meetings. This means that members must support and faithfully represent decisions made in Partnership meetings, even if a member did not vote for or agree with a particular decision. This principle may be set aside in exceptional circumstances subject to agreement between a particular member and the Chair of the Council.

Information which is shared at a Partnership meeting, and identified as needing confidential protection shall be treated as such by all those present, including deputies, guests or invitees, as the case may be (this relates to personal commentary made at the meeting as well as all other confidential written material).

Minutes

The minutes of the Partnership shall be written up and issued to the Chair and co-chairs within seven working days of the last meeting. The minutes of the Partnership shall be made available to Board members at the first opportunity once approved. As a formal Committee of the Social Care Council Board, minutes of the Partnership meetings will also be published on the Social Care Council website.

Reporting

The Chair and co-chairs will provide an annual report on the Partnerships actions, progress and effectiveness in time for approval of the Social Care Council Annual Report and Accounts.

Training

All new members will be provided with Induction training. Training will also be provided to members of the Partnership as appropriate and will include relevant developments in engagement and participation working and related organisational matters.

Date of next review - September 2026