

**Northern Ireland Social Care Council
Unconfirmed Minutes of Council Meeting
Wednesday 3 February 2016 at 10.00am
NISCC Offices, Millennium House, Belfast**

Present: Council

Jim Perry (Chair)	Maire McMahon
Joe Blake	Catherine McPhillips
Geraldine Campbell	Anne O'Reilly
Julie Erskine	Trevor Spratt
Ruth Lavery	Lee Wilson

In Attendance:

Colum Conway (Chief Executive)
 Mark Bradley (Director of Registration & Corporate Services)
 Patricia Higgins (Director of Regulation & Standards)
 Roberta Magee (Chair of Registrants Forum)
 Danny McCann & Peter Mitchell (DHSSPSNI) – Observers
 Uel McIlveen (Participation Partnership)
 Maureen Martin- Minute Taker

Apologies:

Brenda Maitland (Council Member)
 Carolyn Ewart (Vice Chair of Registrants Forum)

Item		Action
1.	Welcome and Apologies	
1.1	The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies had been received from Carolyn Ewart and Brenda Maitland.	
2.	Participation Partnership Book Chapter Submission	
	The Chair of the Participation Partnership set the content before Uel McIlveen verbally updated Council on the contribution of several Participation Partnership members to a 5000 word	

	<p>submission of a book chapter co-edited by Professor McColgan, University of Ulster. The book focuses on the start and end to relationship building within different social work contexts and across a variety of sectors including Learning & Development, Adult, Children and Mental Health. Following consultation with the Participation Partnership group, several members agreed to contribute to the submission of the book chapter.</p> <p>The Chair thanked Mr. McIlveen on behalf of Council, for the time and contribution of the Participation Partnership members and stated that their input may have wide ramifications for both Social Workers and the Social Care community.</p>	
3.	Declarations of Interest	
3.1	None were received	
4.	Chair's Business	
4.1	The Chair gave a verbal update to Council	
4.1.1	Committee membership has been agreed and circulated to Council members	
4.1.2	A Third Horizons workshop for Council members has been arranged for 9 March 2016 and will focus on the logic model. Rob Rae will finalise and circulate his report from the last scenario planning workshop in advance of the meeting of 9 March and this report will be the key component of the Corporate Plan. Sessions with Third Horizons will also be held for the Participation Partnership group, Workforce Development Partnership and NISCC staff in April and May.	
4.1.3	The Chair noted that an Equality Training session for Council Members would follow the Council meeting.	
4.1.4	At a recent Board Self- Assessment session, the appointment of a Deputy Chair had been discussed. Standing Orders allow the Chair to appoint a Deputy Chair and following due process Julie Erskine has been appointed and approved by Council. The Chair thanked all applicants for their interest	
4.1.5	Alternative dates for the Council Strategic session currently scheduled for 25 May 2016 will be circulated.	
4.1.6	An update report prepared by Carolyn Ewart, BASW on the	

	<p>transfer of functions from the College of Social Work to BASW, was tabled for information. The Chief Executive spoke to the report and updated Council Members on the closure of the Social Work College in England and the transfer of functions to SCIE and BASW.</p> <p>A new regulatory body for Social Work will take over from HCPC that currently regulates 26 professions. Due to the remit and experience of NISCC in the training and regulation of social workers, there may be an opportunity to contribute and influence the establishment of the new regulatory body in England.</p> <p>The five countries' regulators have met to discuss the implications of investment in fast track training programmes in England and the ramifications for Frontline. Workforce mobility may be affected as changes in the Social Work degree may mean that social workers who have completed a generic degree outside of England may not be qualified to practice there.</p> <p>The Director of Regulation and Standards noted that the general track in England is to continue with a generic Social Work degree although the investment in specialist training needs to be monitored to ensure that there is parity across all areas of the UK.</p> <p>Decision: Council members agreed that this item that should be taken to the Professional Issues Strategic Review group for discussion.</p>	
4.	Chief Executive's Report	
4.1	<p>The Chief Executive spoke to the Chief Executive's Report</p> <p>The Chief Executive updated members on the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Health & Personal Social Services (Amendment) Bill was laid before the Northern Ireland Assembly on 23 November 2015. The Chief Executive acknowledged the work that has been carried out by the Director of Regulation and Standards and the Department of Health & Social Services who have worked together to bring the Bill through the scrutiny stages and stated that he is hopeful that the 	

	<p>mandate will be approved. The Chief Executive commented on the useful partnership between NISCC and the Department of Health & Social Services and the significance for NISCC in this successful collaboration in bringing the Bill of Amendment to completion through the Assembly, over the next few months.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chief Executive reported that NISCC is currently participating in the Disability Placement Scheme. The participant has been placed in the Administration team until June 2016 and it is proving to be a mutually successful placement. • The Chief Executive reported that an international webinar had been delivered by the Director of Registration and Head of Work Force Development on 27th January 2016 to CLEAR members. The webinar entitled “A Professional Framework for Continuing Competence” had been very well received and garnered excellent feedback. The Chief Executive highlighted the need for focus on the use of technology to disseminate key messages. 	
5.	Minutes of Council Meeting held on Wednesday 21 2015.	
5.1	The Minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting and will be signed by the Chair.	
6.	Matters Arising	
6.1	No matters arising	
7.	Business Matters	
8.	Draft Business Plan 2016/17	
8.1	The Director of Registration & Corporate Services spoke to the Draft Business Plan 2016/17.	
8.1.1	The Director of Registration & Corporate Services reported that the budget for 2016/17 has not as yet been received. The current Draft Business Plan reflects discussions that have taken place around the Corporate Plan this year and, alongside the core work of	

	<p>NISCC, the following key themes have been identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • roll out of registration by March 2017 • centralisation of the Standards of Conduct and Practice improved communications and engagement strategy- it was noted that this will be more explicit in the Corporate Plan and 2017/18 Business Plan 	
8.1.2	<p>Registration:</p> <p>The Director of Registration & Corporate Services noted that the integrity of the NISCC register needs to be protected through the monthly KPIs. The portal is a key component of the roll out of registration and anticipated problems of the non-usage of I.T by registrants have not occurred. Extensive and successful engagement with employers has resulted in a positive response to the roll out of registration and employers are taking ownership of ensuring employee registration. Engagement with four of the Health and Social Care Trusts (HSCT) has taken place and the roll out of registration with the final HSCT is expected to be completed by June 2016. Registration of all of the larger independent providers has been completed. The Director of Registration noted that there was more of a time lag in the roll out process than initially planned for in the Project Plan. The Finance Report reflects the lower additional registrant figures.</p> <p>A Council member queried whether there had been an impact on the time line for the roll out caused by negativity within the social care workforce, who may be unaware of the role of NISCC. The Director of Registration and Corporate Services stated that the use of ICT as the main method of communication underpins the success of the roll out and it is necessary to increase the confidence of the social care workforce in using ICT and the portal. Direct engagement with registrants via local newspapers articles has been commenced to reflect the positivity of registration. This will also impact on the perception and knowledge of registration of local service users which successfully completes the circle of engagement. A Council member questioned whether the newspaper articles may cause an inadvertent backlash by prompting worried service users and carers to contact agencies or bodies for more information. It was agreed it may be helpful to counteract this by updating the Registrants' Forum on press</p>	

	<p>releases for dissemination of information to their members.</p> <p>The Director of Registration and Corporate Services stated all the elements from engagement, a positive response and ongoing feedback from employers and registrants on the process and use of the portal has resulted in revisions to the timeline and portal and will be also be reviewed for lessons learnt.</p> <p>Decision: It was agreed that the Communications team will include the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Registrants' Forum on the distribution list for all newspaper clippings.</p>	
8.1.3	<p>Regulation: The Director of Regulation and Standards reported that focus will be on the implementation of Fitness to Practice. Training for Committee members will be carried out to ensure that the new model is understood.</p> <p>Action: Training for Committee members on the new Fitness to Practice standards will be added to the Draft Business Plan as bullet point under key priorities.</p>	DRCS
8.1.4	<p>Workforce Development: The Director of Regulation and Standards reported that the activities reflect the statutory function for Social Work regulation, training, PRTL audits , Social Work training and deduction and Social Work strategy engagement.</p>	
9.	Performance Reporting	
9.1	Q.2 Business Performance Report (for information)	
9.1.1	<p>The Director of Registration & Corporate Services spoke to the Registration section of the report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Register continues to grow • Trusts are well engaged and are working with NISCC Officers to ensure progression • Independent and Voluntary Sectors are being engaged with and time periods for their staff to be registered agreed • The number of removals for nonpayment of fees was noted 	

9.1.2	<p>The Director of Regulation and Standards spoke to the Conduct section of the report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct performance is slightly lower than expected which is due to outliers linked to lengthy, complex cases • Year to date figures are exceeding 12-15 month target <p>A member noted the increase of social work cases from 2015 to 2016 and asked if this needed to be monitored. The Director of Regulation and Standards explained that multiple complaints against one individual could account for this increase.</p> <p>A member queried whether it was likely that the registration of social care workers would result in an increase in conduct cases in this area of registrants. The Director of Regulation and Standards responded that this was not expected as current cases related mainly to residential care workers. The Director of Regulation and Standards stated that the Fitness model would provide guidance for employers on the role of NISCC as a regulator and the threshold for complaints. Good employee management and HR processes should be implemented before complaints are escalated to NISCC.</p>	
9.1.3	<p>The Director of Regulation and Standards reported that all activities in the Workforce Development RAG system are green and progressing as expected.</p> <p>Members requested that AYE stats from previous years are provided in future reports including details of post AYE status.</p>	
9.1.4	<p>The Chief Executive Officer spoke to the communications section indicating that this will be developed more as we develop the NISCC Corporate Plan.</p>	
9.1.4	<p>The Finance Report was tabled for information.</p> <p>The Director of Registration & Corporate Services spoke to the report and noted that it was linked to the NISCC Allocation letter.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NISCC is operating within budget with a projected slight overspend at year end, which will be managed and brought back into breakeven. • Income as projected at beginning of year but registration income may need reviewed as roll out progresses • Payroll - pay award and ring fenced money for 	

	<p>superannuation noted</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goods and services- slight overspend in some smaller areas • Underspend in Legal and committee fees with legal costs as predicted. Invoices from Tughans will decrease monthly as this is moved across to Shared services • Fewer committees in first half of year so will be monitored over coming months • Money set aside and profiled over the next six months for roll out • Prompt payment status has been reported at Audit Committee already. 	
10.	Partnerships Updates	
10.1	<i>Participation Partnership Forum unconfirmed minutes of 17th November 2015 (for information)</i>	
10.1.1	The Participation Partnership Forum minutes of 17 th November 2015 were noted.	
10.1.2	<p>The Chair of the Participation Partnership updated the Council and the following items from the meeting of 17th November were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion had been held on the PSA report and the Participation Partnership group are looking forward to a wider discussion with the Council • Discussion had been held re service user and carer engagement around the roll out of registration • Four potential new members have been recruited and a formal capacity building session is to be arranged <p>The Chair of the Participation Partnership spoke on an issue that had been highlighted by a member at the meeting of 2 February 2016. The member had expressed disappointment on the lack of effective partnership and engagement with the Participation Partnership for the upcoming Social Care event on 7 March. The Chair of the Participation Partnership stressed that this was an unusual occurrence but lessons could be learnt to maintain trust and employ better engagement for future events.</p> <p>The Chief Executive gave his apologies and noted that this</p>	

	<p>feedback will be taken into account for all future events.</p> <p>The Chief Executive gave an update on the status of the arrangements for the Social Care event and encouraged a good representation of Council members at the event.</p>	
10.2	Workforce Development Update	
10.2.1	<p>The Chief Executive gave a verbal update on Workforce Development as minutes were not available from the previous workshop. A report on the logic model will be available for the next Council meeting.</p> <p>The Chief Executive reported that work has been ongoing on engagement with the domiciliary care workforce and the Workforce Development Partnership will build on the key strategic themes identified.</p>	
10.3	Registrants Forum unconfirmed minutes of 14 January 2016 (for information)	
10.3.1	Registrants Forum unconfirmed minutes of 14 January 2016 were noted	
10.3.2	<p>The Director of Regulation & Standards reported that the Registrants' Forum had primarily focused on the principles of engagement. The Forum has commenced work on feedback from the roadshows on the new standards of Conduct and Practice, which had highlighted the need for more guidance on how to raise concerns on poor practice. The Director of Regulation and Standards confirmed that a joint workshop with the Council will be arranged.</p> <p>Action: A date for a joint workshop with the Council facilitated by Third Horizons to be arranged.</p>	DRCS
10.3.3	<p>Principles of Engagement (for endorsement)</p> <p>The Director of Regulation & Standards indicated that, following an examination of the Principles of Participation, the reforming of the Registrants' Forum had provided an ideal opportunity to implement and approve the Principles of Engagement with the Forum.</p> <p>Decision: Council endorsed the Principles of Engagement</p>	
10.4	Professional Strategic Issues Review Group unconfirmed minutes	

	20 January 2016	
10.4.1	<p>Professional Strategic Issues Review Group unconfirmed minutes 20 January 2016 were noted.</p> <p>The Chair of the Professional Strategic Issues Review Group reported that the forum had focused on the closure of the Social Work College in England and further discussion would take place at the next meeting on the ramifications of this on social work in Northern Ireland.</p>	
10.5	<p>The Director of Regulation & Standards noted that the minutes of the last PiP would be circulated following the Council meeting and reported that the PiP framework has now been consolidated. The Director of Regulation & Standards stated that a more robust report would be given at the next Council meeting.</p> <p>It was noted that the international webinar for CLEAR member delivered by the Director of Regulation & Standards and the Head of Workforce Development on 27 January had come about as a direct result of their presentation at the CLEAR conference last year.</p>	
11.	Audit & Governance	
11.1	<i>Audit & Governance unconfirmed minutes of 20 January 2016</i>	
11.1.1	<p>The Chair of the Committee introduced this paper and advised the Council that the new external auditors, Grant Thornton, had been appointed and had attended the Audit and Governance meeting on 20 January.</p> <p>The Audit & Governance unconfirmed minutes of 20 January 2016 were noted.</p>	
11.2	<i>Corporate Risk Register (for endorsement)</i>	
11.2.1	<p>The Director of Registration and Corporate Services spoke to the Corporate Risk Register.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a new risk has been added to the register : <i>Risk 3 - “ the potential loss of the register due to failure to secure funding to implement an essential upgrade to ensure its viability”</i> <p>The Director of Registration and Corporate Services confirmed that capital funding of £140,000 had been</p>	

	<p>secured following presentation of a Business Case and the risk will be updated at the next Risk Management Committee meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk 11, NISCC office accommodation. Current lease expires 31 August 2016 and following a space utilization survey a new business case will be submitted to the Department and it was noted that approval will be required as a matter of urgency.. <p>The Chair noted this issue as a live risk and requested updates as available.</p> <p>Decision: The Council endorsed the Corporate Risk Register</p>	
11.3	<i>Assurance Framework (for endorsement)</i>	
11.3.1	<p>The Chair of the Committee recommended the Assurance Framework for endorsement following scrutiny at the Audit and Governance Committee meeting. The Council thanked the Director of Registration and Corporate Services for the inclusion of the tracked removal of risks in the paper.</p> <p>Decision: The Council endorsed the Assurance Framework</p>	
11.4	<i>Information Governance Q.3 Report (for information)</i>	
11.4.1	<p>The Council endorsed the Information Governance Q.3 Report pending an amendment to the incorrect figures chart on page 1 (check with MB)</p>	
11.5	<i>NISCC Audit Strategy (for information)</i>	
11.5.1	The NISCC Audit Strategy was noted	
11.6	<i>Internal Audit Progress Report to Audit Committee (for information)</i>	
11.6.1	Internal Audit Progress Report to Audit Committee was noted.	
11.7	<i>NISCC Audit Action Plan</i>	
11.7.1	The NISCC Audit Action Plan was noted	
12.	AOB	
12.1	<i>Social Care event flyer (for information)</i>	
12.1.1	Council was advised that an updated programme for the Social	

	Care event on 7 March 2016 would be circulated and they were requested to inform the secretariat if they would be attending.	
12.2	The Chair was congratulated by members on his recent appointment as High Sheriff of County Antrim for 2016 by the Secretary of State.	
13.	Date of next Council meeting	
12.1	Wednesday 27 April 2016	