

Northern Ireland



Social Care Council
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Social Care Council Board Meeting
10.00a.m on Wednesday 16th October 2019
Millennium House, Belfast

Confirmed Minutes

Present: Council

Anne O'Reilly (Deputy Chair)
Brenda Maitland
Catherine McPhillips
Christine Hunter
Dr David Hayes
Gerard Guckian
Jacqueline McGarvey
Lee Wilson
Roslyn Dougherty
Neil Bodger
Noelle Barton
Sarah Browne

Present

Patricia Higgins, Interim Chief Executive
Declan McAllister, Director of Registration and Corporate Services
Marian O'Rourke, Interim Director of Regulation and Standards
Claire Trainor, Head of Strategic Communication and Engagement
Sandra Stranaghan, Policy and Operations Manager
Mairead Harkin, Workforce Development Officer
Mervyn Bothwell, Professional Advisor
Jordan Adair, Secretariat

Observer

Kate Harrison, Boardroom Apprentice

Apologies

Paul Martin, Board Chair
Rosemary Smyth, Department of Health
Carolyn Ewart, Deputy Chair of Registrants' Forum
Roberta Magee, Chair of Registrants' Forum

Item	Agenda	Action
1.	Welcome and Apologies	
1.1	The Deputy Chair welcomed Members to the meeting, and extended a special welcome to the new Boardroom Apprentice, Kate Harrison. She also congratulated Dr David Hayes Board Member on his appearance on the UTV 'Frontline' programme which profiled the role of Social Workers during the Troubles.	
1.2	Apologies were noted from Paul Martin (Chair), Rosemary Smyth (DoH), Carolyn Ewart and Roberta Magee.	
2.	Declarations of Interest	
2.1	None.	
3.	Service Delivery Presentations	
3.1	<p><u>Progress on Domiciliary Care Training and Transformation – Mervyn Bothwell (MB)</u></p> <p>MB informed Members that the project, funded by the Health and Social Care Board as part of the Programme for Transformation of Health and Social Care was developed to deliver enhanced training to the domiciliary care workforce across Northern Ireland. Whilst the focus and priority is on domiciliary care, access to training opportunities has been opened to the wider social care family. The project pays for attendance/backfill for domiciliary care staff in the private and not for profit sector. MB also confirmed that the project funds organisations to deliver enhanced training.</p> <p>MB also reported on the Social Care Council's partnership with Dr. Jonathan Synnott from Ulster University on research which shows both the need for and interest in developing digital capabilities within the social care workforce. Building on this relationship Dr Synnott is partnering with the Social Care Council on the Experience IT tour to be launched at the Social Care Managers' Forums in November. A van is fitted out to showcase assistive technology and experience the Social Care Council's Learning Zone.</p> <p>Members were informed that the Transformation Project is due to come to an end in March 2020.</p>	
3.2	<p><u>Social Work/Social Care Careers Digital Resources – Mairead Harkin (MH)</u></p> <p>MH reported that the Social Care Council's Learning Zone has been live for just over a year and has 11 digital web based resources including; Promoting Good Nutrition, Value Based Recruitment, Adult Care Toolkit, Induction Programme for Social Care Workers and Towards Safe, Effective and Compassionate Care. She confirmed that recent figures have shown that close to a third of the Domiciliary Care workforce have accessed a learning zone resource.</p> <p>MH gave a demonstration of the new 'A Career in Social Care' resource, advising it is also a useful tool when inducting a new member of staff into an organisation.</p>	

3.3	<p>The Chair thanked MB and MH for their presentations and both left the meeting at this point.</p> <p>ACTION: Secretariat to send a copy of the presentation to all Board Members.</p>	JA
4.	Chair's Business	
4.1	<p><u>Estates:</u></p> <p>The Director of Registration and Corporate Services informed the Board that the Social Care Council will be moving location from Millennium House to James House (Gas Works area of Belfast) in May 2021. He confirmed that the Belfast Optimisation project team were engaging closely with staff in the development of the plans and designs for the space. It was suggested by Members that consideration should also be given to those who frequently use public transport.</p> <p>The Director of Registration and Corporate Services also confirmed that the design team have been made aware that registrants and others would be visiting our office on a daily basis and that the Social Care Council therefore required its own branded reception area and separate confidential hearing suite to enable staff to carry out their statutory functions.</p>	
4.2	<p><u>Landscape Review:</u></p> <p>The Board were informed that the Chair has received a letter from Sean Holland, Chief Social Work Officer (DoH), regarding the ongoing Landscape Review. In the letter he advised that the Landscape Review would be taken forward separately from the other work regarding Social Work infrastructure and systems to sustain and develop the profession of social work into the future. The letter stated that Jackie McIlroy (DoH) would be taking forward the landscape review with a "light touch" approach to meet governance requirements, leaving the other work to be completed over a longer period of time. It was also noted that the Interim Chief Executive is chairing the regional Social Work Leadership Network, which will be contributing to the broader debate regarding social work.</p>	
4.3	<p><u>Inquiry into Hyponatremia – Related Deaths:</u></p> <p>The Board were told that all Arms-Length Bodies had received formal guidance from the DoH regarding recommendation 70 of the IHRD report and that a task and finish group had been set up to consider:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The retention of documentation (which sets out minimum retention periods for agendas, minutes and papers of Board, Board Committee and Sub-Committee meetings); and 2. Accessibility to Board and Board Committee agendas, papers and minutes on the organisations website. <p>Members were informed that the organisation is implementing this alongside the introduction of the Social Care Council's new website.</p> <p>A Member suggested that the Board discuss how the organisation's minutes are structured. It was agreed that it would need to be in line with regional consistency, but also accessible to anyone who wants to read them. The example of the Participation Forum Terms of Reference and minutes were used and confirmed the need for the use of plain English.</p>	

5.	Interim Chief Executive's Report	
5.1	<p>The Interim Chief Executive presented her report and invited questions from Members. The following was discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional HSC Staff Survey – The Interim Chief Executive told the Board that a report had been received outlining the regional outcomes of the survey. She informed Members that the results of the survey would be shared following receipt of the results of the Social Care Council report. Engagement with Nuffield Trust researcher undertaking comparative work about social care across the 4 nations in the UK. Work with BASW NI, IASW and CORU on professionalism in social work. <p>Board Members noted the Interim Chief Executive's Report.</p>	
6.	Minutes of Last Meeting	
	<p>The minutes of the last meeting dated 26th June 2019 were agreed as a true and accurate statement pending the following amendments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> P6 - item 5.1 "It was agreed that a Board Strategic Session would be arranged on Duty of Candour and an invitation to be extended to Peter McBride and Quentin Oliver who are leading on the 2 duty of Candour work streams. This should be recorded as an action. P6 - item 7.1 "The Director of Registration and Corporate Services (DRCS) reported that Whistleblowing training would be arranged for all Non-Executive Directors and appropriate staff" should be recorded as an action. P13 – item 10.3 "roes" changed to "roles". <p>DECISION: The Social Care Council Board agreed the minutes from the previous meeting pending changes discussed.</p> <p>ACTION: Secretariat to make necessary changes to previous minutes.</p>	JA
7.	Matters Arising	
7.1	Following previous discussion it was confirmed that the term 'Board' will be used to describe Members instead of the word "Council" in order to differentiate the roles of the 'Council' and the 'Executive'.	
7.2	As noted in a previous meeting, the DRCS reported that Whistleblowing training would be arranged for all Non-Executive Directors and appropriate staff. He informed Members that the Northern Ireland Audit Office would be delivering it and that it would be circulated for interest in the near future.	
8.	Business Matters	
8.1	<p><u>Proposal for Digital Management of Board Meeting and Supporting Papers (Paper C) – Declan McAllister, Director of Registration and Corporate Services (DRCS):</u></p> <p>The DRCS issued an apology to Members for the lack of hard copy papers sent ahead of the Board meeting and confirmed that he was committed to working collaboratively with them to ensure all work is completed to a high standard.</p>	

	<p>The DRCS introduced the proposals contained in the paper regarding digital management of Board meetings and invited comment. Members stated the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It would be helpful to pilot the digitisation of papers to support the move to this new way of working. • It would be helpful to review the structure of papers for the Board to ensure ease of access. Members agreed that the summary reports provided for this meeting were helpful and made the reports easier to follow and easier to understand what was being asked of them. • It can be an advantage to have paper copies of certain reports, e.g. Risk Register which enables Members to go back and forward between sheets more easily. • A few Members confirmed they were already using the Decision Time software for other Boards they sit on and think that it is a good course of action for this Board to take. <p>A number of Members volunteered to participate in the pilot and form a Task and Finish Group to review the structure of Board Papers, taking into account the IHRD Recommendations in relation to Board and Committee papers. DRCS agreed to support those Members who wished to move forward with the Decision Time Board meeting software.</p> <p>The DRCS also agreed to set up a “Task and Finish” group to review best practice in the preparation, management and support for Board Members and their papers. Along with the Deputy Chair, BM, CH, SB and NB agreed to be members of the group. Board Members agreed that they would like to be invited along to a demonstration of the Decision Time software.</p> <p>ACTION:</p> <p>Secretariat to organise training for those Board Members who wish to move immediately to Decision Time.</p> <p>DRCS to organise the first meeting of the “Task and Finish” group to review Board papers management.</p>	<p>JA</p> <p>DRCS</p>
8.2	<p><u>Q2020 Annual Progress Report:</u></p> <p>The Policy and Operations Manager (POM) presented the Q2020 Annual Progress Report 2018/2019 to the Board and explained that the organisation has to submit this report annually to the Department of Health (DoH) to show how it has delivered, monitored and embedded quality throughout the organisation.</p> <p>The POM set out the progress highlights from the report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreed a Quality Definition following consultation with staff (and a suite of quality principles to underpin this); • Commenced a Quality Improvement Project looking at how we encourage registrants to pay their annual fee online; • Continued to receive positive feedback from registrants and stakeholders on our engagement events and activities across a range of topics/themes; • Continued to ensure quality measures form part of the appraisal process for all staff; • Evaluation of staff engagement events for learning and improvement; 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit of FTP function against the Professional Standards Authority standards; • Survey of FTP witnesses who have been involved in the process to improve how we support witnesses; • Engagement work with staff to identify positive behaviours to support our core values. <p>The POM also set out the actions for 2019/2020:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the QI Project on Online Fee Payments; • Commence a QI Project reviewing how we deliver Customer Services; • Create a Quality Improvement Hub on the Intranet; • Review the effectiveness of our Quality Definition and Principles; • Agree the behaviours underpinning our core values and embed these across the organisation; and • Carry out a review of Data Quality across the organisation. <p>Members noted that this paper was much easier to read and understand than in previous years and appreciated the summary document.</p> <p>DECISION: The Social Care Council Board agreed the Q2020 Annual Report.</p>	
8.3	<p><u>Equality Annual Progress Report:</u></p> <p>Members were informed that the Equality Annual Progress Report was submitted to the Equality Commission on an annual basis using a template provided. The POM confirmed to the Board that the Social Care Council were currently working to develop a more meaningful version of this report to disseminate to staff, service users & carers, the public and stakeholders. She updated Members on the progress highlights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided equality screening training to new staff (4 staff were trained); • Ensured new staff and managers completed their e-learning on 'Making a Difference (19 new staff completed); • Screened policies and decisions (5 policies were screened); • Supported awareness days – on MS and Autism (the Social Care Council arranged for speakers to come in to present to staff); • Carried out a scoping review of how meetings are managed to support service users and carers attending such meetings; • Promoted the Tapestry website – the HSC Disability Network; • Surveyed staff to identify themes for future awareness days resulting in Mental Health and Fibromyalgia awareness days being organised for this year. <p>The POM also laid out the actions for this year, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with BSO to engage all staff to update their S75 details on the HR system (HRPTS); • In partnership with BSO HR and the Equality Unit carry out a review of recruitment practice to ensure this is robust; • Engage service users/carers through the Participation Forum to develop a protocol for ensuring the needs of service users and carers are met at meetings organised by the Social Care Council; • Continued training for staff on equality screening; • Development of quarterly screening reports and data to the Senior 	

	<p>Leadership Team.</p> <p>The Chair of the Participation Forum informed Members that at their recent meeting they had a debate around use of language and putting the person first before the disability. She noted the importance of the use of language in Board papers and Social Care Council information. A Member requested that the action regarding the participation of people with disabilities in public life is suitably reflected. A Member asked if the e-learning on Disability Awareness was available to Board Members and the POM agreed to confirm this.</p> <p>DECISION: The Social Care Council Board agreed the Equality Annual Progress Report subject to the comments above.</p>	
8.4	<p><u>Registration Rules – Update:</u></p> <p>The proposed updates for the Social Care Council’s Registration Rules were presented to the Board. In response to a question about the registration of social workers who had completed specialist social work programmes in England, e.g. Frontline, the Interim Chief Executive confirmed to Members that the previous Council had agreed that such applications to the Register would be assessed on a case by case basis and the individual registered with conditions where a deficit in learning is identified.</p> <p>DECISION: The Social Care Council Board approved the changes to the Registration Rules.</p>	
8.5	<p><u>Standing Orders and Standing Financial Instructions - Update:</u></p> <p>The updated Standing Orders (SO) and Standing Financial Instructions (SFI) were submitted for review and approval. The key changes that were presented were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The addition of the Fitness to Practise Committees. • Terms of Reference for a number of Committees and Partnerships have been updated in the SO. (Approved copies the Participation Partnership and the Leaders in Social Work Partnership Terms of Reference will be attached to the SO and referenced accordingly). • Section 3 of the SO around timing and publication of papers has been updated to reflect the new agreements around these. • The use of the word ‘Chair’ rather than ‘Chairman’. • The use of ‘NISCC’ has been replaced by the Northern Ireland Social Care Council, followed by ‘Social Care Council’. • The current use of ‘Council’ meaning Members will now be referred to as ‘Board’. • The term ‘DHSSPS’ has changed to ‘DoH’ (with full title being used in opening sections). <p>DECISION: The Social Care Council Board approved the Standing Orders and Standing Financial Instructions in principle subject to amendments agreed.</p>	
8.6	<p><u>EU Exit Preparations for the Social Care Council:</u></p> <p>The Board noted the report on EU Exit Preparations for the Social Care</p>	

	Council and acknowledged that DRCS was working with a group convened by the DoH to discuss how this will affect the Social Care sector as a whole.	
9.	Performance Reporting	
9.1	<p><u>Business Performance Report Quarter 2 to 31st August 2019:</u></p> <p>Members were presented with the Business Performance Report for Quarter 2. The DRCS indicated that the report has been revised to provide Members with key information and assurances.</p> <p>The Board reviewed and noted the Business Performance Report for Quarter 2.</p> <p>The POM left the meeting.</p>	
9.2	<p><u>Finance Performance Report to 31st August 2019:</u></p> <p>The DRCS presented the Finance Performance Report to 31st August 2019. He explained that the year to date position for the organisation was a surplus of £78,013. He also briefly discussed the figures in the tables, noting specifically that the fee income was higher than usual but it is not anticipated that this will continue in the rest of the year.</p> <p>The DRCS drew Members attention to the areas in which the Social Care Council are under and overspent across the budget. He referred to the End of Year forecasted position for 2019/2020 and explained the forecasted overspend position. It is anticipated that £106k of the overspend will be funded by the Department of Health as it is related to the increase in pension contributions. He informed Members that a meeting has been arranged with Sponsor Branch and the Finance Director at the Department to review the overspend. The Board will be kept apprised of any continuing financial risks.</p> <p>The DRCS also agreed to ensure the risks facing the organisation's budget are appropriately reflected in the organisational Risk Register and will report back to Members later at their next meeting regarding the Month 8 and 9 financial position.</p> <p>ACTION: The DRCS to keep the Board informed of any financial risks that impact on breakeven.</p>	DRCS
10.	Subcommittees	
10.1	<p><u>Workforce Development Partnership Unconfirmed Minutes (3rd Sept 2019):</u></p> <p>Sarah Browne (SB) gave Members a short update on the Workforce Development Partnership and what had been discussed at their recent meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental Capacity Act and concerns raised that 1500 Mental Capacity Assessors are required to be trained with a deadline of 1st October 2020. • Comprehensive update on the Transformation Project. • The Partnership reviewed the Leadership Statement and agreed 3 priority areas for work: A Communications Strategy to promote the value of social care; A Workforce Strategy which will consider what 	

	<p>is required to build a sustainable social care workforce for the future; and a work stream to focus on Information and Data Intelligence to support planning and monitoring of the social care sector and workforce.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A communication bulletin for the group produced by Head of Strategic Communications and Engagement (HSCE) to help get the issues discussed at meetings circulated to a much wider audience. <p>SB highlighted that the Partnership had discussed a change in name to reflect their leadership role and she requested approval from the Board for the suggested change of name of the group to the Leaders in Social Care Partnership.</p> <p>DECISION: The Social Care Council Board noted the minutes and revised Terms of Reference from the Workforce Development Partnership and agreed the name change to Leaders in Social Care Partnership.</p>	
10.2	<p><u>Terms of Reference for the Workforce Development Partnership:</u> Discussed under item 10.1.</p>	
10.3	<p><u>Terms of Reference for the Participation Forum:</u></p> <p>The Chair of the Participation Forum presented the Terms of Reference to Members and apologised for recalling the minutes from the previous Forum meeting as they were not yet ready for circulation.</p> <p>The Chair gave a brief update from the Participation Forum sharing some highlights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involvefest – the Forum Members will be engaging at Involvefest, providing a workshop on 21st November, talking about why they got involved in the Participation Forum, their challenges and how they feel they have made a difference through their work. • Governance Framework for Delegated Tasks – Members agreed to sign post individuals who they felt should feed into this. • Homelessness Seminar – 2nd December – the Forum were pleased that this was happening, as Social Work and Social Care did not always see where they fit in to combat the issue of homelessness. <p>The Member went on to discuss the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Participation Forum. She informed the Board that the ToR had been translated by the Plain English Campaign and had been given the Crystal Mark to show that the document had been approved by their organisation. She proposed that all Committee Chairs have a meeting to discuss the possibility of presenting a more consistent approach to all Committee agendas, papers and minutes. While Members indicated that the layout and language used for all Board and Remuneration meetings may not be able to be changed, Chairs of all Sub-Committees agreed to meet to discuss how the papers could be more consistent and use clearer, more accessible language, starting with the ToRs.</p> <p>ACTION: Secretariat to organise a meeting for Chairs of Sub-Committees to discuss consistency and the use of clear and accessible language in all papers and Terms of Reference for sub-</p>	JA

	committees.	
11.	Governance	
11.1	<p><u>Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Summary Report (Paper O):</u></p> <p>The Chair of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee presented a summary report of discussion at the last meeting on 2nd October 2019. He informed Members of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Care Council accounts were assessed as operating efficiently from the Comptroller and Auditor General in the Report to Those Charged with Governance. • All internal audit recommendations were either fully implemented or partially implemented. • Internal Audit have completed a full review of the organisations financial and travel systems and provided a satisfactory assurance. • The Fitness to Practise (FtP) risk has been de-escalated from Extreme to High as the executive team have put in place additional resources to manage the current demand. The DRCS confirmed that DoH required some further clarification on the FtP business case which is in progress, and the business case will be re-submitted.. • The ongoing financial risk to breakeven was escalated from a 3 (Moderate) to 4 (Major). • The Business Continuity Plan and Strategy were reviewed and assurance was provided on its operation. • The Information Governance Assurance Report was provided to ARAC and assurance was provided that governance risks and associated information requests are being managed in line with good governance. 	
11.2	<p><u>Mid-Year Assurance Statement (Paper P):</u> Discussed under item 11.1.</p> <p>A Member suggested strengthening the language in the Mid-Year Assurance Statement to reflect the year end breakeven position.</p> <p>Action: Interim CEO and DRCS to review the wording on the Mid Year Assurance Statement and issue to the DOH.</p>	Interim CEO & DRCS
11.3	<p><u>Risk Progress Report (Paper Q):</u> A Member suggested that there may be benefit in arranging a Risk Workshop in the future. It was agreed to look at this in the context of the development of the 1920/21 Business Plan.</p> <p>The Social Care Council Board noted the Risk Progress Report.</p>	
11.4	<p><u>Report to Those Charge With Governance (Paper R):</u> Discussed under item 11.1.</p>	
12.	AOB	
	A Member informed the Board that she attended the BASW AGM on Tuesday 15 th October and noted that it was reported that there had been a significant increase in vacancies for Social Workers. She indicated that this	

	might be something that needs picked up by the Board for discussion. The Interim Chief Executive agreed to discuss with BASW NI.	
13.	Date of Next Meetings	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Board Session with DOH – 30 Oct 2019• Board Strategic Session – 20 Nov 2019• Board Meeting – 05 February 2020	

Signed by Paul Martin, Chair of the Social Care Council

Date: 5th February 2020

Signature:

