



The Annual Report and Accounts of the **Northern Ireland Social Care Council**

1 April 2020 - 31 March 2021

**Working together.
Making a difference.**

14 July 2021

Northern Ireland

Social

Care

Council

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The Northern Ireland Social Care Council
7th Floor, Millennium House
25 Great Victoria Street
Belfast
BT2 7AQ

Tel: 028 9536 2600
Website: www.niscc.info

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**The Northern Ireland Social Care Council Accounts
for the Year ended 31 March 2021**

Laid before the Northern Ireland Assembly under Paragraph 12(4) of Schedule 1 to the Health and Personal Social Services Act (Northern Ireland) 2001 by the Comptroller and Auditor General for Northern Ireland on

02 September 2021

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Glossary - Words we use to describe our work

ALB	Arms' Length Body
AYE	Assessed Year in Employment – the first year in assessed practice for newly qualified social workers
BASW NI	The professional association for social work and social workers in Northern Ireland
Board	This is the Board of the Northern Ireland Social Care Council who provide strategic oversight and direction, and is made up of a Chair and 12 Members.
BSO	Business Services Organisation – provides a range of services for Health and Social Care organisations
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CORU	The regulator for health and social care professionals in Ireland
CPD	Continuing Professional Development – ongoing learning and training
DoH	Department of Health – the government body responsible for Health and Social Care in Northern Ireland
ECHO	Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes - Project to build groups of people to use video conferencing to share learning and good practice
FtP	Fitness to Practise – a registrant's suitability to work in social work or social care
FReM	The Department of Finance's Financial Reporting Manual
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation – the legislation around holding and using personal information
HEI's	Higher Education Institutions
HR	Human Resources – manages staff well-being, development and their employment
HSC	Health and Social Care – the people, systems and facilities that provide medical and personal care and support
IAR	Individual Assessment Route – an option for social workers to have their learning and practice assessed and get a Northern Ireland Social Care Council Award
IASW	Irish Association of Social Workers
ICT	Information and Communications Technology –computers, networks, websites and Apps we use
IFSW	International Federation of Social Workers – a worldwide body representing social work
IIP	Investors in People – an award for good standards in staff and organisation management and development

ISO	Interim Suspension Order – temporary action to stop a registrant working while we make enquiries about a very serious complaint
KPI	Key Performance Indicator – standards we use to measure how well we do our job
KSF	Knowledge and Skills Framework – this is the framework which staff use to ensure they are developing the right level of knowledge and skills to do their jobs well.
NI	Northern Ireland
NICON	The Northern Ireland Confederation for Health and Social Care
OU	Open University
PiP	Professional in Practice – the framework for social workers' on-going learning and qualifications
PPI	Personal Public Involvement – describes the scheme through which we engage service users and carers.
PRTL	Post Registration Training and Learning – 90 hours of learning that all registrants must do to keep their registration up to date
QI	Quality Improvement is a way to identify how a service, process or system can be improved
QUB	Queens University Belfast
Register	The Social Care Council's register is an electronic list of social workers and social care workers working in Northern Ireland (and also students studying for the Degree in Social Work in Northern Ireland)
Registrant	A person approved for registration on the Social Care Register – social workers, social care workers and social work students
RRL	Revenue Resource Limit
RQIA	Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority – checks Health and Social Care organisations are doing their job well
SEHSCT	South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust
Sector Skills Council	The Council is part of a UK-wide Sector Skills Council set up to support employers in ensuring that people working in Early Years and children's services and those working in social work and social care have the right skills and qualifications
Social Care Council	Refers to the Northern Ireland Social Care Council
SLT	The Senior Leadership Team in the Social Care Council
Stakeholders	People who are involved with our work or who are affected by what we do
UCAS	Universities and Colleges Admissions Service
UK	United Kingdom
VBR	Values Based Recruitment – ensuring that people entering social care and social work roles have the right qualities for the job

Chair's Introduction

Welcome



As Chair of the Northern Ireland Social Care Council, I am pleased to be able to present in this Annual Report a strong performance for the Business Year 1 April 2020 – 31 March 2021. The last twelve months has been challenging and difficult times for all of us and COVID-19 continues to impact on our health and social care system. We are committed to providing practical support and guidance for registered social workers and social care workers to be able to carry out their professional duties as safely and effectively as possible.

During the year, the social care register increased to over 52,000 members as people joined the sector to help meet the demands for services. On behalf of the Social Care Council Board Members and staff, I would like to acknowledge the valuable contribution made by each of our registrants who provide vital services every day across Northern Ireland, including those who came back into work to support the sector during the pandemic and students who entered the social work workforce early. Social workers and social care workers are delivering high quality care to everyone in Northern Ireland at an extremely difficult time for all of us – and the value of these roles could not be more important than it is today.

This report accounts for the fourth business year within the Social Care Council's current Corporate Plan (2017-21). When we consulted on our Corporate Plan five years ago, we heard clear messages from our stakeholders about embedding the Standards of Conduct and Practice; developing a culture of career-long learning and development and raising the profile of the workforce. I believe this report demonstrates the difference that our work has made and confirms steady progress towards these outcomes. In addition to maintaining the Social Care Register, we delivered workforce development and regulation activities to ensure those on our register were supported to maintain the standards expected of them. We adapted to remote working and continued with a significant programme of engagement with, and on behalf of, our stakeholders; promoting the value and contribution of the registered workforce and strengthening leadership in the social care sector.

The Social Care Council has been working remotely since March 2020. However in that time, we have been able to deliver all of our services albeit that has required a different approach – with tasks being delivered online, and engagement through video conferencing and webinars. We adapted to this new way of working exceptionally quickly and were able to deliver 'business as usual' within several weeks of remote working. There were many challenges along the way including, responding to the needs of the sector, the development of online learning resources and working with the Department of Health to support their communications with the workforce. Most importantly, this helped ensure that those social workers and social care workers who were re-joining the workforce to support their colleagues could do so quickly and safely and were able to ensure support continued for those who needed social care services throughout the pandemic. We have learnt a lot along the way – including the benefit of maximising messages through social media channels and engaging through video conferencing, thereby reaching many more people than we would have otherwise been able to through face to face communication.

During the coming year, our focus will be on consulting with our stakeholders to shape the next Corporate Plan, building on the strong foundations established over the last four years. The recent review of the Social Care Council's functions and remits that was completed by the Department of Health confirmed the positive contribution of our work to raise standards in the workforce.

Chair's Introduction

The review also identified opportunities to strengthen the career structure for social care and to promote the social care workforce. We are working with the Department of Health to take forward these recommendations and support delivery of the social work and social care strategies. We also want to use this year to identify opportunities to improve our services and make even better use of emerging technologies to enhance future workforce development. The sudden change in working practices brought about by COVID-19 has challenged us to make use of technology to enable us to maintain and deliver our services. Although the advancement of technology was faster than planned, we are maximising the learning we have gained and will take forward these improvements as we plan for the new approaches to our service delivery.

On behalf of the Social Care Council Board Members, I would like to commend all our staff for their efforts and their undoubted commitment to our vision of quality social care services and outcomes for everyone. I also want to put on record my appreciation of the leadership, support and direction provided during this most challenging year by our senior leadership team; Patricia Higgins, Interim CEO, Declan McAllister, Director of Registration and Corporate Services and Marian O'Rourke, Interim Director of Regulation and Standards.

Finally, on behalf of the Board members and staff, I would like to offer my sincere thanks to all involved in our key partnerships (Professional in Practice, Leaders in Social Care and Registrants), who worked tirelessly to ensure the business of the Council continued without interruption. May I also offer my sincere thanks to those involved in the Participation Partnership who, despite the challenges they faced during this pandemic, continued to support our work. This ensured that we remained fully apprised of the serious impact of the pandemic on those using social services at this time and fully focused on our commitment to improving the quality of social services to ensure better outcomes for our most vulnerable people into the future. Further detail is included in the PPI report on page 38.

There is no doubt 2021-22 will be another challenging year, but I am confident we will adapt and change together to ensure that the social work and social care workforce has the skills and values required to deliver high quality services for the people of Northern Ireland.



Paul Martin

Chair, Northern Ireland Social Care Council

Section 1: Performance Report

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council (the Social Care Council) is a public body, established by the Department of Health to raise the standards of practice in social work and social care. This Performance Report provides information about the Social Care Council, its vision and the strategies it must implement to deliver its business priorities safely and effectively.

The information is presented in five sections:

- 1. Statement on Performance for 2020-21** - setting out the vision and purpose of the Social Care Council; the Chief Executive's perspective on performance against objectives and the risks to the achievement of those objectives;
- 2. COVID-19** – the impact on service delivery for 2020-21
- 3. Performance Analysis** - providing a balanced and comprehensive analysis of performance during the year, trends identified and actions identified for the coming year;
- 4. Personal and Public Involvement Report** – summary of the partnerships and projects involving people who use services and carers in our work; and
- 5. KPI Summary** – Achievement against objectives and key performance indicators for 2020-21

Our Purpose

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council is responsible for:

- Maintaining a register of social workers and social care workers in Northern Ireland;
- Setting standards for social workers and social care workers for their conduct, training and practice; and
- Setting standards for and regulating social work education and training in Northern Ireland

Performance Report

Our Vision - Improved standards in social work and social care

Our Values

There are four key values which underpin our culture that set a foundation for how we work with those around us.

Respect
Integrity
Partnership
Excellence

We promote Respect

We are trusted by the sector to support good social work and social care practice. We respect the rights, dignity and inherent worth of individuals.

We work with Integrity

We work with integrity and are mindful of our responsibilities and hold ourselves and others to account. We are open, honest and respectful with all our stakeholders.

We believe in Partnership

We are a people focused organisation that is committed to doing what is right. Through genuine partnership, we work to ensure what we do makes a difference.

We strive for Excellence

We take a professional approach in putting standards at the heart of social work and social care. We proactively support the development of the social care workforce and we proactively support the development of our staff.

Our Purpose - To protect the public and safeguard service users through the regulation and development of the social work and social care workforce

Performance Report

Strategic Themes, Objectives, Aim and Principles

As the regulator for social work and social care, our core activities are focused on Standards of Conduct and Practice, working to see that they are consistently applied across all areas of social work and social care practice, improving public protection and helping to improve quality and outcomes for people who use services.



Our work is themed around five key areas:

Theme 1 - Standards

Putting Standards at the heart of social work and social care practice, education and training

Setting and raising standards in social work and social care practice, education and training.

Theme 2 - Regulation

Regulating the Workforce and Social Work Education and Training

Ensuring the functions of Registration, Fitness to Practise and Regulation of Social Work education establish clear benchmarks for good social work and social care practice.

Theme 3 - Workforce Development

Developing the Social Work and Social Care Workforce

Better outcomes for people who use social care services will be achieved by a regulated workforce that delivers safe, effective and values led care.

Theme 4 - Systems Leadership

Promoting a Systems Leadership Approach across the Social Care Sector

Through collaborative partnership working, facilitating new thinking and fresh perspectives to reduce harms, minimise risks and improve quality in the delivery of social care services.

Theme 5 - Communication and Engagement

Communicating, Connecting and Engaging

Creating and delivering effective and meaningful communication and engagement to support delivery of the Corporate and Business Plans.

Infrastructure – People, Resources, Governance, Quality and Systems

Our five strategic themes are supported by an overarching corporate objective to ‘ensure the Social Care Council has the necessary infrastructure i.e. the people, resources, governance and estate management arrangements in place to deliver its strategic objectives’.

An overview and commentary on how we performed against the objectives for these strategic themes during 2020-21 is set out in the following pages.

Chief Executive's Statement on Organisational Performance for 2020-21



Despite the challenges of delivering our services through the COVID-19 pandemic, this Annual Report for the period April 2020 to March 2021 reflects a strong performance against our business objectives. When we agreed these objectives with our Board and the Department of Health last year, we did not anticipate the rapid organisation redevelopment that was required in spring 2020 to allow us to deliver our services within the constraints of COVID-19 and remote working.

This report includes a summary of the impact of COVID-19 on our work and the supports provided for the registered workforce to ensure they continued to provide front line social care services. There were many positive outcomes such as the increased use of technology, which enabled us to engage with and support our registrants and stakeholders, and the development of a suite of e-learning resources to support registrants' practice during the pandemic. As we evaluate the impact of our work in 2020-21, we will draw on the learning from the changes we have made and are committed to integrating the best of these new practices as we move forward in to the new business year and the transition out of lockdown.

It is encouraging to see the difference that our work has made to both the registered workforce and those they provide services for in the last year and our plans for the next few years will build on these achievements. With our partners and stakeholders, we will continue our work to support and develop the social work and social care workforce. During 2020-21, there was significant time invested in developing campaigns to raise awareness of the valuable contribution social workers and social care workers make to our community and our economy. The social work advertising campaign in the Autumn challenged people to 'Think Social Work' and the social care campaign which went live in May 2021 has shone a light on the positive difference made by social care workers every day to the lives of people and in our communities. I am immensely proud of the social care stories that are now being shared across all media platforms and would like to thank all those who worked with us to bring together such personal experiences.

I would like to acknowledge the commitment made by each of our staff in delivering services throughout this year whilst working remotely. Each member of staff has played their part to help make a difference for our registrants, their employers and the people they provide services for. I also want to commend our social work and social care registrants who have worked tirelessly during the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure that people who need services have received support. We worked very closely with social work and social care leaders to understand what supports were needed for the workforce and, through partnership working, we adapted our services and developed resources to meet their needs. We will continue to work in partnership with providers of social work and social care services, with government departments and education providers to ensure our registrants are supported to carry out their work safely and effectively and are recognised for the contribution they make every day on the front line of Social Work and Social Care.

The Social Care Council Corporate Plan and our annual Business Plans, have been developed using an 'outcomes based approach'. The benefit of this approach is that our plans clearly describe what we are trying to achieve and the difference we want to make. Alongside recording achievement against performance targets, we used qualitative methods to find out about the difference this work is making for our stakeholders, including: surveys, emails and face to face engagement.

Highlights for 2020-21 include:

- Financial break-even achieved, with a surplus of £11,000 against Revenue Resource Limit (RRL), which was within financial guidelines of £20k/0.25% RRL;
- Satisfactory levels of assurance identified across all Internal Audit reports;

Chief Executive's Statement on Organisational Performance for 2020-21

- Social Care Register maintained for 52,000 registrants;
- 11,534 registration applications (new and renewal) processed; 95% were completed within the KPI of 20 days or less;
- Emergency Register and application process supported the swift recruitment of 3,069 people into the workforce (53 social work and 3,016 social care staff) to facilitate the HSC workforce appeal in response to COVID-19;
- Promoted and supported the HSC workforce appeal in response to COVID-19;
- Quality Assurance processes for social work education and training delivered within agreed timeframes; opportunities for improvement identified;
- 439 concerns about registrant Fitness to Practise triaged; 96% within three working days;
- 67 Fitness to Practise Committee days held to consider 19 applications for registration, 38 new Interim Suspension Orders and 6 Fitness to Practise Hearings;
- 293 Fitness to Practise Decisions taken including: 103 Letters of Advice/Reminders of Standards, 11 Warnings, 5 Undertakings, 2 Removal Orders, 5 Removals by Agreement;
- Quality Assurance processes for social work education and training delivered within agreed timeframes; opportunities for improvement identified;
- Open University was approved and supported to deliver the first distance learning route for the Degree in Social Work in Northern Ireland from Autumn 2020;
- 240 Newly Qualified Social Workers graduated from Degree courses in Northern Ireland;
- 171 Social Workers achieved Professional in Practice (PiP) Awards for their CPD
- 8 new online resources were published and 3 existing resources refreshed on the Learning Zone;
- 132% growth in activity on the Learning Zone, with 3,800 users and 3,500 page visits (on average) each month;
- 9 Lunchtime Seminars and 21 Social Care Echo sessions hosted to share best practice;
- Delivery of an integrated advertising campaign across radio and digital channels to support recruitment to the Degree in Social Work in Northern Ireland.
- Website and digital media redeveloped to support accessibility (average 60k website visits per month)
- 99% system availability achieved for the online registration service;
- Registration database and online guidance developed to improve user experience;
- Online Registration Portal refreshed to facilitate registrants and employers in maintaining registration information.

Assurance on the Management of Issues and Risks

Effective governance systems are in place to support the regular review of issues and risks which could affect business delivery. This provides assurance to the Board, our sponsor department and our stakeholders on the organisation's ability to deliver its organisational objectives. The Board set the strategic risks and appetite for the organisation as part of the Risk Management Strategy. The Risk Appetite Statement and Matrix in Appendix 3 of this report set out the level of risk with which the Social Care Council aimed to operate across the key areas of Finance, Compliance, Safety, Service Delivery and Reputation in order to deliver on the strategic business themes in 2020-21.

Chief Executive's Statement on Organisational Performance for 2020-21

As noted in the synopsis of the impact of COVID-19 on Service Delivery on page 13, the Business Plan for 2020-21 was developed before the onset of the pandemic and then subsequently, delivery of business activities was adapted to ensure progress continued towards strategic objectives. For each of the Business Themes, the Risk Appetite Statement and Matrix were used as a reference to introduce changes to business priorities and service delivery methods. During the year, we monitored closely those risks which had been identified as having the potential to impact on the achievement of the Business Plan objectives. The Board Audit and Risk Assurance Committee reviewed the Risk Register and Assurance Framework at each of their meetings. Strategic risks identified included financial performance towards achievement of breakeven and resourcing to support growth of the Fitness to Practise function. A strategic risk in relation to the management of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has been included on the Risk Register since March 2020.

A priority for the Social Care Council during 2020-21 was to deliver the statutory functions of workforce registration and regulation through remote working practices. The Board had set the risk appetite for these statutory functions as 'Cautious' in terms of compliance with legal obligations and also the standards expected of social care registrants in order to ensure public safety. The Board had allowed for an 'Open' appetite for risk in terms of service delivery and this allowed the management team to adapt systems and processes for the remote delivery of these key functions and the introduction of new technologies to facilitate online engagement. As is shown in the Performance Analysis (pages 16-24) registration and regulation services, including online Fitness to Practise Committees and Hearings were delivered effectively through alternative arrangements.

Issues in relation to financial pressures during the year are also referenced in this report; including resourcing for the development of the Fitness to Practise function, the deferral of registration fees between April and October 2020, the additional costs incurred in equipping staff for remote working and amending the online registration/online learning services. The appetite for financial risk is set as 'Cautious' and throughout the year, regular reviews of financial performance were undertaken with the Department of Health. This ensured the risks to the financial position and sustainability of the Social Care Council was effectively managed. Additional funding was allocated by the Department of Health for the development of the Fitness to Practise functions and resourcing for remote working. Financial assistance to address the shortfall in registration fee income was agreed with the Sponsor Branch at year-end.

The Social Care Council has also taken a proactive approach to support social care providers to meet the pressures experienced as a result of increasing demand for services against an environment of growing financial pressures. We have worked closely with social work and social care leaders to provide a network where issues, risks and opportunities can be explored and collaboration with policy leads and service commissioners can be facilitated to provide sustainable solutions. Further detail is included in the Performance Analysis for each Business Theme. Summary of the assurances provided by our risk management processes is detailed in the Governance Statement on page 50.

I am satisfied that the Social Care Council has performed well against the objectives set out in the 2020-21 Business Plan. Further narrative on performance against each of the objectives is contained within the performance analysis and in the annual accounts within this report.



Patricia Higgins, Interim Chief Executive, Northern Ireland Social Care Council

COVID-19 – the Impact on Service Delivery for 2020-21

The Social Care Council started working remotely from home from 19 March 2020 in response to Government advice and the social distancing measures which were announced last year. All staff were already equipped with laptops to enable them to work remotely and were supported in adjusting to working from home. The organisation developed a Supplementary Plan to its Business Continuity Plan to set out its priorities and operational arrangements during the pandemic.

It has been a year since the start of remote working and staff remain working from home. The impact of the pandemic has been unprecedented on home lives, working lives, families and communities. As the Annual Report for 2020-21 is being drafted, the pandemic is very much still with us and social distancing measures remain in place. There is however hope for everyone as the pathways to recovery are being rolled out alongside the vaccine programme.

While this Annual Report sets out what was delivered by the organisation in line with its business objectives and change of priorities as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, we felt it was also important to capture here the COVID-19 specific outcomes and activities for the organisation during 2020-21.

Supporting the Sector

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has brought into sharp focus the value and importance of the social work and social care workforces. Throughout the pandemic social workers and social care workers remained resolute, delivering care and support to those in need. However, it was a workforce that, like others in the HSC, was also impacted by the pandemic and there was a recognition that additional support was required. In the early stages of the pandemic the Department of Health asked the Social Care Council to support a 'call-out' to social workers and social care workers who had previously left the workforce, to return to help support their colleagues. The Social Care Council supported this campaign through social media and videos, while within the organisation 'emergency procedures' were put in place to fast track registrants onto the register.

The DoH also agreed to defer collection of registration fees that were due payment between 1 April and 30 September 2020 until October 2020, and the Social Care Council made changes to its IT system and processes to enable this. In addition registration certificates were amended to clearly display the HSC logo to help enable the workforce to avail of the number of initiatives being offered to health and social care workers – including access to supermarkets at key times and free travel provided by Translink NI.



HSC logo added to our Online Certificate



The Social Care Council also enabled students who were studying for the Degree in Social Work to quickly move from their last year of study directly into the workforce while ensuring that employers' systems of support to protect newly qualified Social Workers were also in place.

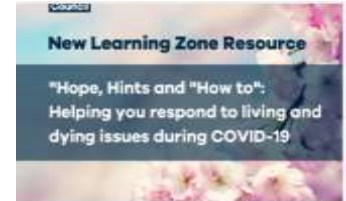
COVID-19 – the Impact on Service Delivery for 2020-21

Online Services



With the social care workforce under pressure to deliver services, more accessible ways to access learning and support resource materials were needed. The Social Care Council remodelled a number of its learning platforms on its 'Learning Zone' so that these could be accessed by registrants and employers 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. This flexible approach meant that registrants could also access learning advice and support when they were actively working. An example of this was the 'Supporting Good Infection Control' guidance which was shared with the workforce.

In addition, the Social Care Council had been working on its new website and registrants' portal. These new websites were launched during the year, and provided for all of the Social Care Council's services to be accessed remotely.



New Learning Zone Resource

Communications and Engagement

The Social Care Council delivered an extensive range of online resources and used social media to push out key messages and information to the sector. This included presentational videos with front line social care workers and also supporting the 'Clap for Carers' on a Thursday evening.



When the DoH asked the Social Care Council to help promote and support its vaccination campaign to encourage the social care workforce to avail of the vaccine, the Social Care Council developed a communication campaign in support of this.



The Social Care Council started to redevelop its lunchtime seminars during the year. Prior to COVID-19 these seminars were held (up to 12 each year) in the Social Care Council's offices in Belfast and were very popular – often being oversubscribed and restricted to up to 60 people within the office environment. With social distancing and remote working, the Social Care Council launched its first online lunchtime seminar in September 2020. The uptake was significant, and since then the organisation has hosted 12 seminars across a wide range of topics. The advantage of this approach also enabled a greater reach across the workforce – with 150 and more attending each of the seminars – with the only restriction on attendance being the capacity of the video conferencing software.

Going forward the Social Care Council will wish to get the balance right between face to face seminars and online engagement.

Governance

Throughout the pandemic the Social Care Council continued to ensure good governance remained in place for all aspects of its business. The organisation's Command and Control team were activated early in March and met online three times a week for the first nine months, before rebranding its title to 'COVID Business Leadership Team' (CBLT) in recognition of how the business was evolving and managing the impact of the pandemic as part of its new way of working. CBLT also reduced their meetings to twice a week every week, and that remains the case going into 2021-22.

The Social Care Council's Board met more frequently in the first six months of the pandemic and are updated at every meeting on COVID and its impact on the business. The organisation created a strategic risk on its risk register and this continues to be monitored and controls and actions reviewed.

COVID-19 – the Impact on Service Delivery for 2020-21

During the year, Internal Audit carried out a ‘Governance during COVID-19’ audit and the organisation received a Satisfactory Assurance, with the range of good governance that was put in place being acknowledged.

Business Changes

The Social Care Council also had to change the way it delivered aspects of its business. Fitness to Practise hearings could no longer be held face to face and significant work and changes were put in place to hold online hearings.

Registrants and others were encouraged to engage with the organisation online (through the Portal or by email) rather than by phone or in person. This increased the volume of emails significantly and resources were put in place to ensure emails could be responded to. This included during the period of registration fee recovery, following the deferral of fees by the DoH to October 2020.

Social Care Council

The Social Care Council also supported its own workforce of 60 staff to remain connected and look after their physical and psychological wellbeing. Working remotely presented various challenges and staff responded well to this. The Social Care Council held regular pulse surveys with staff to check how they were doing, what additional support or resources they needed, and to ensure everyone was safe. The organisation held monthly ‘Townhalls’ for all staff to get together and learn about what was happening across the organisation and share their own learning experiences.

The office premises remained closed however work was carried out to comply with social distancing measures to plan for a phased return of staff as set out in its Business Transition Plan. This included re-arranging desks to comply with the 2 metres social distancing, the development of a one way system and office protocols to ensure everyone’s safety.



During August, the organisation ran a pilot scheme to encourage staff to come into the office in small numbers to test out the one way system and the range of social distancing measures. The pilot proved successful – and demonstrated that work is a function and not a location. The organisation also recognised that for some staff, working remotely from home was not their preference or conducive to their wellbeing and needed to find ways to provide an alternative working environment.

Unfortunately with an increase in the COVID transmission rates over the autumn and winter months, the return to the office was put on hold pending government advice to remain working from home where possible.

Staff were encouraged to look after their health and wellbeing and the organisation’s ‘Health and Wellbeing Committee’ were active in encouraging a range of initiatives while raising money for charity.

This included raising over £700 for Mencap in completing the ‘Mencap Mountain Challenge’ and almost £900 for the Trussel Trust where a number of staff collectively walked the equivalent virtual miles to Istanbul.



The full range of work delivered during the year is set out in this Annual Report.

Performance Analysis for 2020-21

To ensure that our work to support registration, regulation, education and development is effective, the Social Care Council applies a regular cycle of monthly reporting, quarterly evaluation and reflection; learning from experiences and adapting to changing workforce needs to shape how our work is developed and delivered. This 'Overview of Performance' section highlights achievements for the year across each of the Strategic Themes in our 2020-21 Business Plan. It includes key learning outcomes gained from our review of performance and provides a summary of the success indicators identified for 2021-22. Further information on our objectives for the coming year are published in our Business Plan for 2021-22 (available from our website www.niscc.info).

Strategic Theme 1 - Standards

Standards are the cornerstone of everything the Social Care Council does to strengthen the professionalism of the registered workforce across Northern Ireland. Plans for our Standards work in 2020-21 were underpinned by a programme of face-to-face engagement with registrants, employers and key stakeholder groups to raise awareness and understanding of the Standards. With the limitations of working amidst COVID-19, the programme used digital technology to continue with our objectives to provide information and support for registrants, their employers and stakeholders to develop their understanding of the Standards and how they apply in daily practice. Alternative engagement channels included:

- Zoom information sessions with groups of registrants in their work or home setting;
- Telephone contacts and virtual meetings with teams and management boards to ensure employers and managers were able to support their workers in maintaining the Standards;
- Online presentations and discussions with employers, managers and governance leads in the HSC Trusts to promote the Standard of Acceptance and to share learning from Fitness to Practise cases and referrals to ensure that appropriate Fitness to Practise concerns arising during the pandemic were reported and addressed in a timely manner.
- Information, videos and seminars about Registration and Standards shared via social media and e-zines.
- Social Care ECHO virtual sessions for social care managers to support and connect front-line managers and share best practice on service delivery (on a weekly basis during the first quarter and then on a monthly basis throughout the year).
- 'Making the Right Decision' online learning resource which was published on the Social Care Council Learning Zone to provide guidance on applying the standards in work-based scenarios.
- Registration Matters' webinars series and supporting resources delivered in Quarters 3 and 4. These included case studies, presentations and discussions on the Standards and maintaining registration.

Performance Analysis for 2020-21

Standards – Objectives for 2020-21

We said we would

- Deliver a programme of engagement with social care workers to raise awareness about the Standards and how to apply them in their work.
- Deliver a programme of engagement with social workers to support the use of the Standards in their work and in their professional development.
- Deliver a programme of engagement to raise awareness with people who use services and their carers about the role of the Social Care Council and their confidence in the social care sector.
- Work with employers and RQIA to develop ways to monitor use of the Employer Standards.

Standards – What we did and the difference this made in 2020-21

Information and engagement with registrants and employers is helping to make the Standards of Conduct and Practice relevant, trusted, understood and embedded

Developed and Promoted ‘Making the Right Decision’ Learning Zone Resource to support registrants and employers to understand how to apply the Standards in practice. The resources use work-based scenarios to provide practical examples of how to use the standards to guide decision-making and good practice.



Delivered the ‘Registration Matters’ webinars and Digital Campaign to promote the Standards, registration and continuing professional development.

- 600 people were engaged across the 10 sessions in the webinar series.
- 81% of registrant attendees said the ‘Registration Matters’ materials would assist them in maintaining their Registration & Standards (n=122 feedback forms)
- 25% average increase in knowledge of registration and the Standards as a result of the webinar was reported by participants
- 91% of participants said the information would help them manage their registration, or assist others to manage their registration.



Performance Analysis for 2020-21

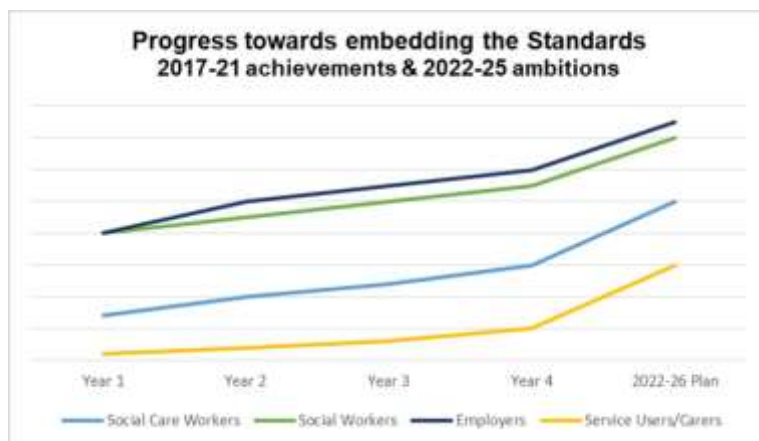
Connected and supported Domiciliary Care Managers throughout the pandemic using the Social Care ECHO virtual meetings and seminars.

- 21 ECHO Sessions engaged an average of 40 managers per session; sharing experience and discuss best practice on standards, management of COVID and improving service delivery (sessions were held weekly during Quarter 1 and then monthly for the remainder of the year).
- Participants were involved in setting the agenda for ECHO sessions
- Facilitated peer-led presentations as well as co-ordinating information-giving from the Social Care Council Fitness to Practise and Workforce Development Officers, RQIA, DoH and the PHA.
- 84% of participants said the sessions made them feel better supported in their social care role

“I find the Echo network sessions very useful. As a manager, it is important to confer with my peers, discuss any issues and look at solutions; the sessions have allowed me to do just this. The topics are relevant to my work and I believe it equips me with additional ideas and tools I may not have thought of before. It has helped me build knowledge and I would encourage any Social Care manager to join it.”

Standards - What we have learned in 2020-21:

- Awareness, understanding and use of the Standards is improving across the stakeholder groups
- There is movement towards more regular use of the Standards and for these to become part of everyday practice Stakeholders are at different stages in their understanding and use of the Standards and how they support good practice
- People who use services and their carers have less awareness of the Standards but know how to report any concerns about a registered worker
- We need to increase our engagement and support to move all stakeholders from ‘awareness’ to ‘embedding’ the Standards



Standards - Indicators of Success we have set out in our Business Plan for 2021-22

- At least 70% of social care workers are reporting that they are aware of the Standards and know how to apply them in their practice.
- At least 90% of social workers are reporting that the Standards are helping improve the quality of their social work practice.
- At least 80% of employers are reporting that they use the Employer Standards.
- Establish a benchmark of awareness of the role of the Social Care Council and confidence in the social care sector with people who use services and their carers.

Performance Analysis for 2020-21

Strategic Theme 2 – Regulation

Regulation activity spans the three functions of Workforce Registration, Regulation of Social Work Education and Workforce Fitness to Practise. Together, these establish and maintain clear benchmarks for good social work and social care practice. The Regulation activity planned for 2020-21 included an extensive programme of work which was adapted to reflect the change to remote working and successfully delivered to ensure standards of social work and social care were maintained effectively. Significant time and resource was invested in reviewing and developing the people, systems, processes and partnerships that enable us to deliver a model of regulation that responds to the changes in stakeholder and environmental needs.

Regulation - Workforce Registration 2020-21

52,000 people were registered with the Social Care Council at 31 March 2021. The register has increased by 30% in the last five years, primarily due to completion of compulsory registration for social care in 2018/19. The Register experienced a 16% increase in the last twelve months (40% of which was linked to the introduction of an Emergency Register in 2020 for the DoH Workforce Appeal). There has been a continued focus on managing our resources to ensure that we have the resources and systems in place to support the needs and expectations of the workforce. The ongoing development of the registration database and integration of new technologies for online registration services has been a key element in our successful delivery of the registration function using remote technology in 2020-21. The refresh to the online registration portal has facilitated over 11.5k people to complete new applications, or renew existing applications in the year – which is an increase of 20% in applications processed (9,549 completed in 2019-20). The 3,000 people who registered under emergency arrangements for COVID-19, have been offered the opportunity to update their registration on a permanent basis as part of the programme. The Register is not likely to experience a similar growth pattern in 2021-22 unless additional staff groups are required to be registered, or a further workforce appeal is required to address COVID-19 pressures.

During 2020-21, workforce registration was delivered primarily through the online registration portal for registrants and employers. Email was also the main channel for providing customer support. Customer emails were monitored closely throughout the period to ensure that staff resources were prioritised in order to address queries and requests for support promptly. Telephone helplines were provided in peak periods to assist organisations with pressures in registering their staff and facilitating fee payments. During the year, staff engaged regularly with employers by telephone and Zoom. Service delivery was reviewed and resources and support networks developed to help existing registrants to maintain their registration as well as guide new entrants joining the register in response to the DoH Workforce Appeal.

Interventions and supports provided in 2020-21 included:

- Adaptation of the registration application process to facilitate Emergency Registrations in the first six months of the pandemic
- Updating guidance materials for the online registration portal to support registrants and employers in the registration process
- Amendments to the registration fees system to facilitate Department of Health policy to defer registration fees between April and September 2020
- Introduction of technology linked to the telephone system to enable staff to remotely provide follow-up phone calls when needed
- Joint working with the universities to transfer successful final year students to the Qualified Social Worker part of the Register
- A programme of communication and support to managers and registrants to engage effectively with the refreshed registration service and the restart of registration fees on 1 October 2020

Performance Analysis for 2020-21

Regulation - Workforce Fitness to Practise 2020-21

Although less than 1% of the workforce is referred to us with regard to their fitness to practise, the significant increase in the size of the register over the past five years has increased the overall number of allegations we receive about registrants' fitness to practise. Concerns about 439 registrants were referred in 2020-21. 17% of these concerns did not meet the Standard of Acceptance and were screened out at the triage stage. A further 11% were screened out after Provisional Enquiries were undertaken and 72% (315) resulted in a new Fitness to Practise case being opened for investigation. Fitness to Practise referral rates dropped in the early weeks of lockdown, but returned to expected levels in May, averaging 40 per month from then on. 16 COVID-19 related referrals were received during the year, mostly relating to breaches of COVID regulations or the use of PPE. During 2020-21, the Registration Team referred 390 applications for registration to the Fitness to Practise Team for assessment. This, along with the 35 already in the system, gave a total of 425 applications requiring assessment representing a 34% increase from the 2019-20 business year. This increase can be partly attributed to the number of emergency applications received in Quarters 1 and 2. 86% (367) of the total applications for assessment were concluded within the reporting period.

Our Fitness to Practise Model of Regulation provides us with a wide range of disposal options including Consensual Disposals. This approach supports engagement with the registrant to address less serious concerns and offers the opportunity to apply a proportionate and timely sanction that can support remediation and improvement in practice. During 2020-21, we disposed of 7% cases consensually. It is important to highlight that all Consensual Disposals decisions are public facing and subjected to regular external audit to ensure openness and transparency. 293 Fitness to Practise cases were closed during 2020-21. 121 cases were referred to Committees. Committees made 112 decisions involving registration applications, Interim Order applications and Fitness to Practise final orders. All of these hearings were delivered remotely. 40 Interim Order applications were made representing a 30% increase from 2019-20. 51 Interim Order reviews were held, representing a 36% increase on the previous year. In relation to the outcomes of Fitness to Practise Hearings, 4 Removal Orders were made along with 1 Conditions of Practice Order. 1 further case remains part heard. During the year, 3 registrants made appeals to the Care Tribunal against Fitness to Practise or registration decisions; the outcomes of which are still awaited.

It is not yet certain whether the level of referrals and cases will settle at current levels. Additional funding was approved by the DoH in 2020-21 to increase the staffing resource for Fitness to Practise team and Committee function in response to the increasing volume of work and the more complex nature of the cases being referred. Recruitment for two Fitness to Practise Officers and a Committee Clerk commenced in Quarter 4. The team is also reviewing business processes and application of technology to support case management to ensure we have the skills, systems and technology to deliver this function well. In order to deliver Fitness to Practise functions remotely during 2020-21, the team engaged with a wide range of stakeholders including employers, Department of Health, BSO Legal Services, RQIA and other regulators to identify the most appropriate methods to manage referrals, cases, Interim Orders, Committees and Hearings remotely. Sharing information and experiences throughout the year enabled Fitness to Practise to deliver a robust and equitable service via email, Zoom and telephone. The Fitness to Practise Rules and processes were reviewed to ensure they could be delivered via remote working without causing any detriment to those registrants or participants involved.

Key elements of Fitness to Practise service adaptations and developments for 2020-21 included:

- Adaptation of the processes for assessment of referrals, investigation of existing cases and delivery of case conferences for application by telephone, email and Zoom
- Review of the Fitness to Practise Rules to support Fitness to Practise and Registration Committees via Zoom (following engagement with legal advisers and stakeholders)
- Recruitment scheme commenced to recruit two Fitness to Practise Officers and a Committee Clerk and planning is underway to address business support needs.

Performance Analysis for 2020-21

Regulation – Social Work Education and Training 2020-21

The Social Care Council has a statutory responsibility to set standards for social work education and training at both qualifying and post qualifying levels. In 2020-21, there was extensive engagement with course providers, tutors, practice teachers and employers to ensure the safe delivery of Degree in Social Work teaching and practice learning throughout the pandemic. Final assessments were completed to facilitate the early graduation of 240 students in their final year of the Degree who were assessed as reaching the required standard. We have worked closely with employers and the DoH to ensure the required supports are in place for these new social workers as they commenced their first Assessed Year in Employment. Strategic and operational meetings have continued throughout the year to plan for the recruitment of new students to courses and to co-ordinate the teaching and practice learning for existing students. Following approval of the first Open University distance learning course for the Social Work Degree in NI in March 2020, support has been provided to ensure the course meets the required standards. The first OU students were recruited in autumn 2020 and the first review of the course was completed in March 2021.

Assessment for the full suite of Professional in Practice Awards continued throughout the pandemic. Taught programmes completed their assessment of candidates and the Individual Assessment Route Panel confirmed 28 submissions in May 2020. The External Assessor Report confirmed consistency across all three routes for PiP submission assessments. The annual PiP Awards to recognise social workers' achievements on the Framework was held virtually in August, with 171 Awards delivered, including the first three recipients of the Advanced Scholarship Award.

As the pandemic and restrictions continue, the Strategic Advisory Group for qualifying and post qualifying education and training in social work has met on a regular basis to ensure continued safe and effective delivery of the Degree and provision within the PiP Framework and to approve modifications for contingency plans. Considerable effort by all partners has ensured that all Degree programmes including Practice Learning are on track and the vast majority of PiP programmes have been delivered to capacity alongside sustained engagement with other assessment routes. All scheduled regulatory functions including approval, monitoring and quality assurance activity have been successfully delivered. Liaison has continued to support the Open University in establishing their Social Work Degree in Northern Ireland. It is anticipated that COVID-19 pressures will impact on the number of social workers who will have capacity to complete PiP courses this year. Work is continuing with the PiP Partnership and social work training teams to encourage and support social workers in fulfilling their CPD responsibilities. A workshop was delivered for the PiP Partnership to consider future priorities for the PiP Framework and these will include learning from the pandemic experience in how best to support on-going professional development.

Key elements of Social Work Education adaptations and developments for 2020-21 included:

- Review of student places on Degree courses to reflect pressures on 2020 deferrals
- Monitoring of student progress whilst they are receiving predominantly online learning
- Development of processes and supports for new social workers, including a tracking survey to assess the impact of the new AYE arrangements (reporting will run into 2021-22)
- Review of practice teaching and learning provision (reporting in 2021-22)
- Suite of new Handbooks developed for the Individual Assessment Route and published on the Learning Zone to support social workers making submissions
- Monthly review of social workers who are due to complete PiP Two Requirements for their registration and provision of support for those requiring extensions in the current circumstances
- PiP Credit Accumulation Panel held to review submissions for social worker PRTL
- Standardisation training held online for new and existing PiP Assessors

Performance Analysis for 2020-21

Regulation – Objectives for 2020-21

We said we would

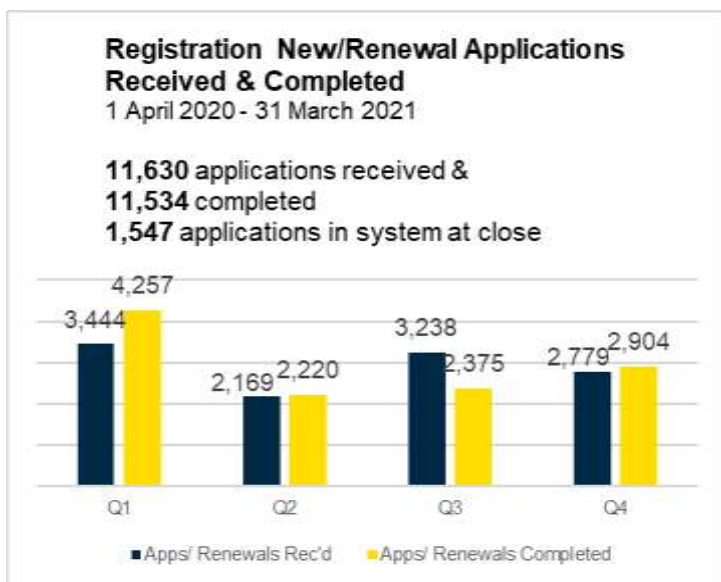
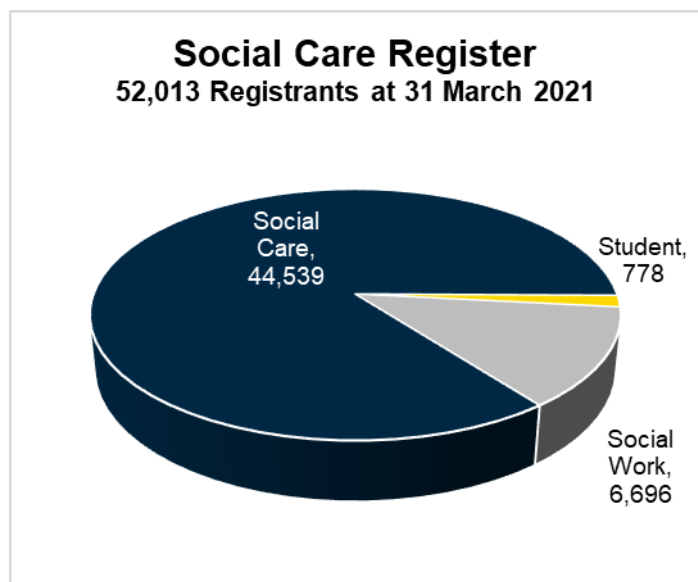
- Support registrants and employers to meet their responsibilities in maintaining social care registration.
- Deliver an improvement programme to develop the online registration system so that it meets the needs of registrants.
- Review the FtP Rules and processes against best regulatory practice to ensure the continued delivery of a proportionate and efficient system of workforce regulation.
- Through engagement with the DoH, ensure our Fitness to Practise function has the right level of resource to effectively carry out our statutory duties.
- Approve and assure standards of social work education and training at qualifying and post qualifying levels.

Regulation: What we did and the difference this made in 2020-21

Social work and social care registration is valued and trusted

The Social Care Register is accurate and registration systems are being adapted to meet the needs of the workforce and the sector.

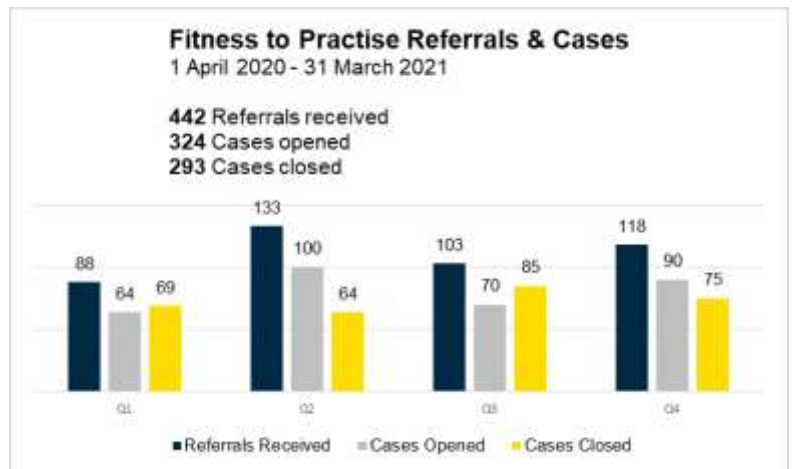
- 95% of applications were processed within 20 days
- 70,000 emails were resolved for customers requiring registration support
- 68 registrations on the Public Register were updated with Fitness to Practise decisions
- Online guides were updated to assist registrants and employers using the refreshed application processes and online registration system to maintain registration
- Audits of AYE assessments were completed to confirm standards of assessment for new social workers are consistent across employment sectors
- Registrant Post Registration Training & Learning records were sampled to confirm CPD was completed to the required standard and advice provided to those who required additional development.



Performance Analysis for 2020-21

The Social Care Council is an agile regulator able to respond to changing need and demand
 Fitness to Practise decisions are trusted and concerns about an applicant’s suitability to work in social care are managed efficiently.

- 99% of referrals were triaged within 3 working days
- 38 new Interim Suspension Orders were concluded (100% within 4 weeks)
- 53 Interim Orders were kept under review
- 86% of cases were closed within 15 months
- Zoom training was provided for Committee Members and participants to facilitate remote delivery of proceedings.
- Fitness to Practise Committee Members and Chairs participated in training sessions and ‘360’ reviews to support consistency and quality in decision making
- Fitness to Practise Officers participated in workshops to refresh their investigative skills in regulatory best practice.
- 60+ people were supported by telephone, email and Zoom to enable them to contribute effectively in Committees and Hearings (registrants, employers, and witnesses)



Social work education and training meets the needs of registrants and employers

- 240 new social workers graduated from Degree courses (June 2020)
- 292 new social work students commenced their Degree in Social Work (Sep 2020) - includes 25 students on the new OU distance learning Degree in Social Work
- 259 new social workers completed their Assessed Year in Employment (annually)

Professional in Practice Framework provides valued CPD Opportunities for social workers

- 171 PiP Awards granted at the in summer 2020 virtual event:

- ✓ 54 Consolidation Awards
- ✓ 108 Specialist Awards
- ✓ 6 Leadership and Strategic Awards
- ✓ 3 Advanced Scholarship Awards

- 284 new social workers completed the PiP Two Requirements for their professional development

- 9 social workers assessed for their PRTL through the PiP Credit Accumulation Route

- 41 social workers assessed for PiP Awards through the Individual Assessment Route (submissions ranged across 3 awards: Consolidation; Specialist; Leadership and Strategic)

- 153 candidate outcomes from PiP Approved Programmes processed for 2021 Awards

- 28 existing PiP Assessors and 4 new Assessors engaged in Standardisation training

- 12 PiP Approved Programmes identified for annual monitoring

- Promotion of the Framework to social workers on the ‘Leading Social Work Programme’

- Substance Use and Substance Use Disorders (SUDS) Programme approved at QUB



Performance Analysis for 2020-21

Regulation - What we have learned in 2020-21:

- We need to meet increasing demands on the Registration and Fitness to Practise functions, which will require a review of systems and application of ICT
- We need to implement recommendations from the Review of the Degree which support the development of new social workers
- We need to engage front line social workers and their managers to increase use of the PiP Credit system and Framework

Regulation - Indicators of Success we have set out in our Business Plan for 2021-22

- A minimum of 97% of registrants successfully maintain their registration throughout the year
- A minimum of 85% of registrants use the online system to maintain their registration
- 100% of Quality Assurance processes for social work education and training are completed within required timescales and recommendations for improvement identified
- Referrals and cases are managed efficiently in line with best practice, FtP Rules and key performance indicators
- Our Register is robust, accurate and quality assured

Performance Analysis for 2020-21

Strategic Theme 3 – Workforce Development

This year our workforce development activity was focused on providing support for registrants to progress on social care vocational courses, or by providing online learning resources to help them to improve the quality of care that they provide and support their ambitions for career development. Social care course providers, employers and qualifications bodies have been engaged and supported to ensure that students are facilitated to complete or extend their learning as appropriate. The rapid onset of the pandemic and the requirement for most learning to be delivered online (or at a distance) required the adaptation of online learning resources to support social care induction and build knowledge in key areas as infection control, shielding, isolation and bereavement. The Learning Zone platform was refreshed to improve accessibility and we worked closely with expert groups to develop relevant learning products to support the wider public health agenda. This provided the workforce with some of the skills and knowledge they needed to deliver services in the midst of the challenging new environment. Social Care ECHO has proved to be a valued support for social care managers and support will continue for this virtual network of social care managers, enabling them to share information about managing services during COVID-19 and beyond.

During 2020-21, the Social Care Council supported and delivered programmes to help recruit, develop and retain social workers and social care workers. Engagement has continued with local Social Care Skills Academies and online careers and employment events to help support workforce recruitment. The team has worked closely with the Department of Health and the Leaders in Social Care Partnership to take forward a programme of work for the development of proposals that will support a career structure, CPD framework and qualifications based register for the social care workforce. This work continues and initial reports will be presented to the DoH early in 2021-22 business year. During Quarters 3 and 4, the second Social Work careers campaign was delivered across radio and digital media. Funded by the Department of Health, this built on the 2019-20 campaign to coincide with UCAS applications timetable.

Central to how we deliver on our workforce development objectives is our partnership working with a wide range of stakeholders to create a culture of continuous professional development for the registered workforce. The learning and development needs of social workers and social care workers are significantly different and we will continue to deploy our resources to support their specific needs and priorities. Changes in service delivery will require them to grow in confidence and adapt their skills base to use emerging technology and apply new ways of working that focus on personalised and compassionate care. It is anticipated that there will be a continuing need for digital learning resources that can be accessed from a variety of mobile devices and used to support induction and development of the workforce.

Key achievements for workforce development in 2020-21 included:

- Providing direct support for workforce learning and development leads in key organisations to support their continued workforce development during the pandemic
- Researching the range of qualifications held by social care registrants and mapping the qualifications recognised for the various job roles across the sector.
- Surveying all social care registrants to establish the changes in attitudes to use and benefits of technology to support social care delivery (analysis will be completed in early 2021-22.)
- Delivering the series of lunchtime seminars with over 1000 people participating online
- Developing 8 new online resources and refreshing existing resources on the Learning Zone
- Presenting PiP Information sessions online to social workers in work-based forums and team meetings in a range of sectors to share information about CPD, standards, registration and regulatory responsibilities etc.

Performance Analysis for 2020-21

Workforce Development – Objectives for 2020-21

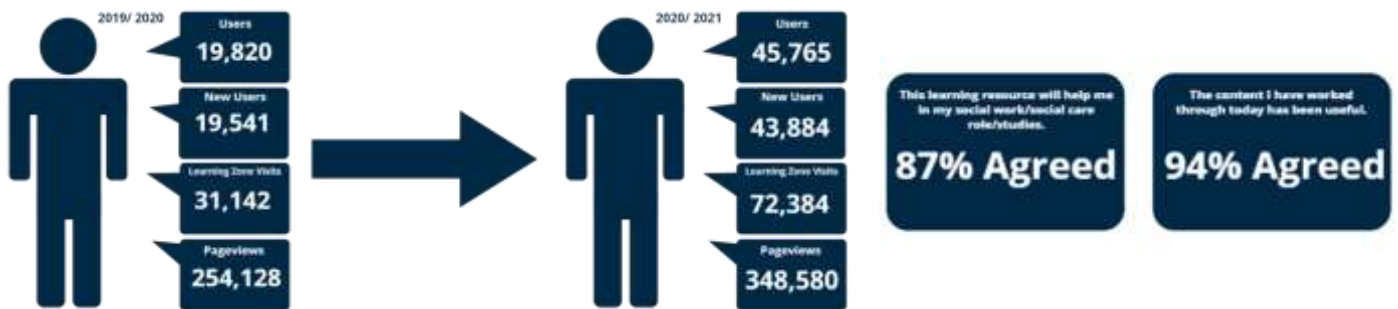
We said we would

- Develop proposals for consultation on a system of revalidation to link Post Registration Training and Learning requirements with the Professional in Practice Framework for the social work profession.
- Work in partnership with stakeholder organisations to deliver careers and recruitment campaigns for social work and social care.
- Develop a learning and improvement framework for social care workers which will support the development of a career structure.
- Develop our digital learning platform to provide registrants and employers with greater access to learning and employment resources.

Workforce Development - What we did and the difference this made

The suite of Learning Zone resources was extended with new and updated resources published to support remote learning and develop good practice.

- Traffic on the platform increased by 135% (compared to 2019-20 activity).
- 94% of survey respondents said the learning was useful to them



Learning Zone resources for 2020-21 include:

- Supporting Good Infection Control
- Palliative Care and Bereavement
- Shielding
- Social Isolation
- Resilience
- Social Work and Social Care Careers
- Making the right decision (Standards)
- Bereavement – ‘Hopes and Hints for living in COVID-19’
- Supporting People Living with a Dementia
- Professional in Practise CPD Framework for Social Work



Co-production work in developing COVID-19 resources was recognised with the European Social Services ‘Outstanding Team Award’ November 2020

Social Care Career Framework

- A review of qualifications held by current social care registrants was completed in partnership with employers and social care educators.
- Recommendations on relevant qualifications for social care have been prepared for DOH to ensure that proposals for a career structure for social care are drawn from a sound evidence-base.

Performance Analysis for 2020-21

PiP Framework and Social Work CPD

- Objectives for 2020-21 included scoping options to link social worker PRTL to the PiP Framework. Scoping this year reviewed registrant engagement with the Credit Accumulation Route
- PiP Partnership workshop held in November 2020 identified barriers to engagement. This work will continue in 2021-22 as the first step in developing a recognised career structure.
- Scoping was undertaken into social worker revalidation

Supporting Recruitment and Employment

- 7,000 people have accessed the Induction Programme for Social Care through the Learning Zone (6,435 social care workers and 454 managers)
- 1,143 people have worked through the resource for Values, Behaviours and Person-Centred Practice
- 950 people have accessed the 'Values-Based Recruitment' resource
- 82 people were recruited into Social Care Academies and 68 supported into employment

Sharing Knowledge and Best Practice

Lunchtime Seminars - 9 Lunchtime Seminars delivered by social work and social care registrants to share innovation and best practice. Seminars covered an extensive range of subjects, including:

- Parent-carer perspectives on family based short breaks
- HIV Awareness
- Adversity and Trauma Responsive Practice
- Mainstreaming community development approaches in social work
- Sexual Exploitation of Young Males

82% of participants reported that learning from the Lunchtime seminars would help them in their role
32% average improvement in knowledge of the subject matter was reported

Our collaborative approach with employers, registrants, social care educators and Awarding Bodies has been effective in supporting workforce learning and development throughout the pandemic.

Workforce Development - What we have learned in 2020-21:

- We need to focus our resources on consolidating the Learning Zone and evaluating the use of existing products. Linking Social Work PRTL to PiP Credits would enable social workers to gain recognition for their learning & development within the PiP Framework
- Establishment of a Learning Framework for Social Care and a recognised career structure would attract more people to the workforce
- We need to promote domiciliary care training to support upskilling of the workforce
- Information and awareness sessions will help build digital confidence and improve digital skills in the workforce. Virtual learning networks will support social care managers to share learning and develop innovative approaches to service delivery

Workforce Development - Indicators of Success we have set out in our Business Plan for 2021-22

- A Proposal is agreed for consultation on revalidation of social worker registration through the PiP Framework.
- A minimum of 85% participants who engage with the events and campaigns report an increased awareness of social work and social care careers.
- The DoH is supported in building a sustainable social care workforce.
- Uptake in the number of people undertaking learning through the e-enabled technology available on our Learning Zone is increased by 10%.

Performance Analysis for 2020-21

Strategic Theme 4 – Systems Leadership

Systems Leadership activity has brought together key interests from the sector to establish networks of people who can collaborate on development and improvement. Our work to connect social work and social care leaders is helping to shape social work and social care as Health & Social Care Transformation moves forward. Now, more than ever, insight from sector leaders is needed to inform strategic workforce planning and development. As the workforce regulator, the information and intelligence we hold about the social work and social care workforce is unique and we are uniquely placed to collect and use this information to help inform strategic decisions to support the sector. Our continued ambition remains to use our workforce intelligence to support the leadership challenges in social work and social care.

During 2020-21, work continued towards building our skills and capacity to analyse the information we gather about our registered workforce and share trends and knowledge with the DoH and our sector partners to help develop the workforce. Live information about the workforce is essential for the Social Care Council and our sector partners for forecasting and planning. A suite of database reports were built to generate live information about the profile of our registered workforce which can be linked to analytics tools to map our data according to where people work and where services are required. We will continue to invest in our capacity and capability to analyse and report on our unique workforce information in 2021-22.

As part of the DoH programme to reform social care, the Social Care Council's Leaders in Social Care Partnership have worked closely with the DoH to draft the Compact Agreement for formal engagement between Government Departments and the social care sector. Work also continued with the Leaders in Social Work, a more established network which is collaborating on current and future needs for the social work profession in NI. Established under the auspices of the DoH Social Work Strategy, this network comprises leaders from the statutory, voluntary, education and justice sectors. The network has key in raising the profile of social work in all sectors, and developing a collaborative approach on strategic issues impacting on the social work workforce.

In spring 2020, proposals were prepared to build on the successful Domiciliary Care Training project which we delivered on behalf of the HSCB in 2019-20 to support HSC workforce transformation. This included a recommendation to build workforce capacity to use digital technology in social care delivery. Social care registrants and employers were surveyed in autumn 2019 to assess their attitudes towards the use of technology to deliver social care services. At that time, 49% of social care workers said they were using technology to deliver social care services and 83% of participants agreed that technology could help support them to deliver improved social care. The restrictions placed on our engagement and training activity by the pandemic meant that training was delivered solely by online platforms. A further survey was issued in March 2021 to establish changes in attitudes to the benefits and use of technology as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Feedback from the survey will be used to inform workforce learning and development activity for the social care workforce in 2021-22.

Staff and Board Members have contributed to project boards and initiatives to ensure social care is reflected in strategic development within and outside the HSC system, including the Social Work Workforce Strategy, the Reform of Adult Social Care, Connected Health, Community Planning and Brexit implementation. The Social Care Council has also worked closely with the DoH, HSC partners and sector representatives to support knowledge exchange. Regular meetings with regulatory partners in the UK and Ireland continued online to ensure learning was shared to support standards in regulatory practice. The recommendations set out in the DoH Landscape Review of the Social Care Council to strengthen Systems Leadership and build workforce intelligence, along with the successful bids to lead on workstreams for social care promotion and strategic development were initiated and will continue into 2021-22.

Systems Leadership – Objectives for 2020-21

We said we would

- Work with the DoH and other Government Departments, Community Planning Leads and employers to inform strategic workforce planning and policy development.
- Continue to develop our capacity and capability to analyse and report on our data for workforce demographics, qualifications, training and learning.
- Through the Leaders in Social Care Partnership, we will support the transformation and development of the social care workforce in Northern Ireland.
- Continue to chair and participate in the Social Work Leadership Network to support the development of a collective leadership approach for social work.

Systems Leadership - What we did and the difference this made in 2020-21

We have worked with sector leaders, government bodies and representative organisations to influence the development and transformation of the system as well as being a connector and facilitator for many parts of the system that do not always have a prominent position.

Support for COVID-19 Strategic Projects

- DoH Workforce Appeal - workforce intelligence and resources provided for employers and Departmental colleagues to connect with potential social work recruits;
- Department of Health Rapid Learning Review on the Impact of COVID on the social care workforce (survey managed and analysed)
- Recognition for social work and social care in front – led communications programmes on behalf of the DoH to thank the workforce for their contribution to the front-line during the pandemic;
- Collaborative working with universities and employers to support the early qualification of final year social work students and the continued delivery of courses for 2020-21 academic year;
- Joint working with exam bodies and course providers to develop alternative course delivery and assessment options for Vocational courses;
- Social Care Council 'named contacts' list promoted to social work/social care leaders to provide resources and support;
- Suite of learning resources developed to support registrants responding to COVID-19.



We have contributed our unique knowledge of the registered workforce to local, national and international contacts to promote best practice and innovation. These include:

- UK and Ireland social work and social care regulators - benchmarking standards and sharing learning
- Skills for Care - Board and Directors meetings;
- Health and Allied Professions Regulatory Forums – sharing learning and identifying opportunities for collaboration;
- Local Council Employment Academies & Community Planning – Engagement with Planning and Social Economy Leads to provide guidance and support
- Social Work England – sharing knowledge and best practice to support development of Standards of Conduct and Education for social workers registered in England;
- 'Global Perspectives on Health & Social Care' participating in the St Petersburg College webinar

Performance Analysis for 2020-21

Contributions and support for strategic meetings and networks

Presentations, blogs and posters for prepared for:

- NICON (NI HSC Confederation)
- COVID and Inequalities – joint seminars with DoH and Ulster University
- SCIE – Regulating in a Pandemic blog
- Financial Wellbeing Tools and Supports - joint seminars with DoH and the Money and Pension Service
- Regulating in a Pandemic – presenting at the Centre for Effective Services seminars ‘Rapid Implementation of Services in Different Settings’
- International Journal of Social Work Education – joint publication with Ulster University and SHSCT on social work education in the pandemic ‘Testing Partnership and Preparedness in Northern Ireland’
- Social Work Awards 2021
- Radical Social Work project
- NI Social Work and Social Care Regional Research Programme
- BASW webinars



What we have learned in 2020-21:

- The Social Care Council produces workforce intelligence reports which inform business and strategic planning, including a State of the Nation Report each year.
- The Leaders in Social Care Partnership programme of work for 2021-22 is delivered across the strategic priorities of vision, inclusion and innovation.
- The Social Care Council continues to develop as a systems leader for the social care workforce and wider sector.

Indicators of Success we have set out in our Business Plan for 2021-22

- We must increase our capacity and capability to analyse and report on our information;
- A strategic voice is needed to help shape social work and social care as Health & Social Care Transformation moves forward
- Insight from sector leaders is needed to inform strategic workforce planning and development

Performance Analysis for 2020-21

Strategic Theme 5 – Communication and Engagement

Since our establishment in 2001, communication and engagement with our registrants and stakeholders has been has remained a key theme, recognising that to deliver our statutory functions we need to effectively connect with our registrants and stakeholders to successfully deliver our business. To support the outcomes set out in the current Corporate Plan, we have invested time promoting social work and social care, developing our social media presence and creating engagement forums for leaders, managers and front-line registrants to strengthen our connections with the sector.

Our focus for 2020-21 has been to invest further in our digital communications to compensate for the restrictions placed on our capacity to deliver on face-to-face engagement. Communications were delivered through email marketing, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn and our website. Recognising that the workforce was under pressure during the pandemic, campaigns were co-ordinated to ensure key messages were delivered to the target groups in proportionate volumes and at optimum times. We took time to develop quality artwork, images and videos that would attract and engage our stakeholders with the Social Care Council brand and message. This integrated approach has been particularly effective when using Email campaigns together with social media (especially Twitter). Development of e-zines tailored to specific groups has increased 'open-rates' to 50/60%. Our campaigns have been supported and shared by DoH and our HSC partners, helping to extend our reach to those interested in social work and social care.

The new Social Care Council website was launched in October 2020, alongside a review of the content and branding on the online registration portal to provide a seamless transition between the two platforms. This redevelopment includes the incorporation of BrowseAloud software to provide assistance with language, visual aids and audio assistance. On average 60k people visit the website every month and 800 people use the BrowseAloud service to help them with accessibility.

Approximately 120k emails were sent every month in our aim to keep our stakeholders connected with our work. Direct email marketing has proven vital in keeping registrants and employers up to date with service changes throughout the pandemic. The social media platforms and website remain key to sharing information and also continue to provide opportunities for the DoH and other partners to connect with the registered workforce and their employers. We lead on campaigns to promote Public Health messages such as Infection Control and supporting those who were isolated or shielding. We developed and delivered campaigns to recognise the significant contribution of social workers and social care workers on the front-line. To support Department of Health in raising awareness of social work as a positive career choice, we refreshed the social work advertising campaign that had been produced in 2019. Advertisements were broadcast on radio and digital channels to encourage applications to Degree in Social Work courses in autumn 2020.

Social Care Council digital audiences grew significantly during 2021-22, with Audience growth at 30% for Facebook, 20% for Twitter and 123% for YouTube. This shows the effectiveness of videos and interactive pieces to attract and engage people. It is anticipated that COVID restrictions will continue to limit our access to face-to-face engagement in 2021-22 and digital communications will be the major element of our activity to keep listening to our stakeholders, learning from their experiences and sharing our knowledge and expertise with them

Performance Analysis for 2020-21

Communication and Engagement – Objectives for 2020-21

We said we would

- The Social Care Council – we will deliver our Communications and Engagement Plan for 2020-21 to build an understanding of the role and purpose of the Social Care Council.
- Social Workers – we will deliver our Communication and Engagement Plan for 2020-21 to engage the profession and raise the profile of Social Workers.
- Social Care Workers – we will deliver our Communication and Engagement Plan for 2020-21 to support the transformation and development of the social care workforce.

Communication and Engagement - What we did and the difference this made

Campaigns to Support COVID-19 Projects

- Registration & Regulation in COVID-19 – FAQs
- Registration – Guides to the Emergency Application processes
- Working in the Pandemic - advice for workforce
- DoH messages – Public Health, Workforce Appeal, Thank You for Frontline Workers
- Vaccination for HSC workers
- UK Workforce Survey – Social Care & COVID-19
- Inequality and COVID Webinars (UU, DoH, BHSCT)



Campaigns to Raise Awareness of Social Care in the Front Line

- Clap for Carers
- Campaign with supermarkets
- Campaign with Translink
- Digital Certificates
- Endorsements from leaders and local figures



Resources, News, Events and Webinars – Videos and promotional materials were developed. Communication plans were developed and invitations tailored to meet stakeholder profiles to ensure information reached target audiences for:

- Learning Zone – new and updated online resources
- Standards for Social Work and Social Care
- Lunchtime Seminar Zoom Series
- Social Care ECHO – virtual network meetings and education presentations
- Registration Matters webinars (videos and guidance materials)
- Money Matters Webinars (DoH and Pensions Service)
- European Social Services Awards (Learning Zone)



Campaigns for Partner Organisations

- 'Be a Social Worker' – DoH Advertising Campaign
- Social Care Campaign – DoH Social Care Transformation Project
- Social Care Recruitment – Department of Communities
- BASW webinars



Performance Analysis for 2020-21

Learning Zone and Registrant Portal Refresh

- Design of new identity to reflect brand and Corporate website redevelopment
- Information shared with Registrants (mailchimp, social media, website)
- Design of presentations and materials for online guidance

Social Work Education and Training

- PiP Awards 2020 – Virtual ceremony videos and presentations, digital invites and social media teasers prior to the event.
- PiP Congratulations – Video congratulations and endorsements from leaders and local figures



New Website Launch - October 2020

- Redesign to support user journey
- BrowseAloud integrated to improve accessibility
- 60k visits per month (since launch)
- 800 BrowseAloud users per month (most people used the translation or speech to text functions)



What we have learned in 2020-21:

- A Communication and Engagement Strategy will support and co-ordinate our key efforts and messages Communications must be clear and easy to understand
- People who use services and their carers involvement in our work must be evidenced and the outcomes shared with other stakeholders
- Online resources are essential in reaching such a large and disparate stakeholder group Improving public perception is a long term outcome
- More work is required to solidify communication and engagement with our immediate stakeholders – registrants, employers, people who use services and their carers

Indicators of Success we have set out in our Business Plan for 2021-22

- The role, purpose and vision of the Social Care Council is clearly mapped out and enables the organisation to meet the needs of registrants, interested public and the sector.
- Consistent messages on the value of social work are established, and further embedding of the Standards is evident.
- Baselines are established for awareness levels of the value of social care as an active career choice.

Performance Analysis for 2020-21

Infrastructure and Leadership

Infrastructure is about the people, systems and processes that guide and deliver our work. Our KPI's in relation to absences, appraisals, and finance were successfully achieved.

The Social Care Council is committed to engaging staff in regular events for all staff to learn more about the business. Based on feedback from the staff survey and in-house events, we learned that some staff felt we could do more to improve connections within the organisation. The Leadership Team has developed a monthly Townhall meeting for updates and for teams to take turns to present to colleagues on what their work involves. The Social Care Council continued with this programme during remote working. Staff also indicated that more could be done to improve the appraisal system with a greater focus on the conversation rather than the paperwork. A fresh approach to appraisals has been developed, following consultation with staff, and the new system called quarterly 'Check-Ins' was introduced in spring 2020.

The Social Care Council's Health and Wellbeing Committee developed a yearly calendar of health and wellbeing events to support all staff in their physical and mental health wellbeing, encouraging people to participate in book groups, walking clubs and charity fundraisers. Feedback from the 2020-21 programme was very positive and the team invited staff to share suggestions for the 2021-22 programme.

Objectives across the Infrastructure and Leadership theme were linked to the areas of People, Resources, Systems, Governance and Quality.

The Social Care Council is an IIP (Silver) accredited employer and retains the IIP Good Practice Award for Health and Wellbeing. Staff are engaged in a range of activities, supporting the overall delivery of the Social Care Council's Business Plan. The Senior Leadership Team, chaired by the Interim Chief Executive, has worked with staff to ensure the staffing resource is deployed to support business priorities. During the year, staff participated in the HSC Cultural Assessment Survey. The outcome from the survey was very positive with good and strong indicators throughout. The survey reflected the positive culture of the organisation and its leadership.

Throughout 2020-21, online systems were the only route for applying for new or renewed registration. A continuous programme of improvement and development was delivered to ensure the registration database and the online registration portal supported our registration and regulation functions. The system was adapted in April 2020 to reflect the DoH policy to defer registration fees. System development was undertaken to streamline the application journey and functionality for payment of fees/updating registrant information. The new functions and refreshed registration portal were launched in October 2020 in line with the timetable to reintroduce registration fees. During the year, 11.5k registrations were completed and 40k registration fee payments online. Improvements to the system and the provision of support and guidance on using the online system have assisted in the transition to full digitalisation of the service.

Performance Analysis for 2020-21

Infrastructure – Objectives for 2020-21

We said we would

- People - Deliver the actions identified for 2020-21 business year arising from the Investors in People Report.
- Resources - Manage our resources to maximum effect and within regulatory and statutory guidelines and legislation.
- Governance - Deliver effective governance including risk and information management in line with relevant legislation and guidance.
- Quality -Deliver on our Quality 2020 commitments for 2020-21 as set out in the Annual Quality Action Plan
- Systems - Deliver our 2020-21 ICT Improvement Plan to further enhance the user experience of our registration and regulation system.

Infrastructure - What we did and the difference this made in 2020-21

We supported staff to manage their health and wellbeing and our staff absence rate was 3.6% (just marginally above the KPI of 3.5%)

- Internal communications strengthened and staff connection with the business objectives improved through quarterly staff business events;
- Intranet updated regularly with news and links to useful resources including self-care;
- All staff Townhalls and business briefings;
- News and updates for staff via e-zines and CEO email bulletins;
- Regular all staff engagement events;
- Health and Wellbeing Committee programme of exercise, social support, fund raising and events to recognise staff contributions;
- New 'Quarterly Check in System developed to replace the traditional appraisal system;
- Break even achieved
- Business case to support Fitness to Practise was approved and funding secured.

Governance – Business was delivered in line with legislation and Good Governance guidelines

- Business was planned for 2020-21 with objectives and KPIs approved by the leadership team;
- Business reporting was stepped up to produce weekly reports to provide assurance on the delivery of business and monitoring of staff welfare during remote working for COVID-19;
- Risk management processes and Risk Registers updated - providing assurance on the good governance of our business;
- Audit and Risk Assurance Committee met quarterly to review assurance reports and risks that were reported;
- Audit schedule was completed and satisfactory assessments were received across all audits.

Quality – We delivered on our Quality 2020 commitments for 2020-21 as set out in the Annual Quality Action Plan.

- Staff were engaged in activities to promote and deliver good practice in equality and diversity including a series of information sessions on disability and mental health awareness, ensuring we are compliant with good governance and equality legislation;
- All staff have been trained and supported to take an active role in quality improvement for their own work and for the team;
- Quality Improvement projects for improving engagement with the customer service survey and to increase uptake of the online registration service have involved staff from across all teams;
- Feedback from QI projects was displayed on posters and white boards in the office.

Performance Analysis for 2020-21

Equality and Diversity

The Social Care Council is committed to promoting equality and diversity; providing the systems and culture to meet the duties set out within Section 75 of the Equality Act. The Social Care Council developed and delivered the annual Equality Action Plan and annual Disability Action Plan for 2020-21, in addition to a broad range of equality founded policies and procedures. (The Equality Scheme is reviewed every five years). The Equality Unit in the Business Services Organisation, provided guidance and expertise on delivering on Equality Action Plans and supported statutory reporting to the Equality Commission. Details of what the organisation has done to deliver its equality, diversity, disability, Human Rights and Good Relations actions are set out in the Annual Equality Progress Reports which can be found on our website at www.niscc.info Due to the impact of COVID-19, the Equality Progress Report for 2019-20 was delayed. Development of the 2020-21 Equality Progress Report is on target for completion by the end of August 2021.

Systems – Delivered the 2020-21 ICT Improvement Plan to further enhance the user experience of our registration and regulation system.

- Registration and Regulation ICT system continually developed to improve user experience;
- SOCRATES Change Board reviewing system development and improvement;
- Launched new website and Registrants' Portal;
- Reports developed to provide analysis of information held within the registration database
- Online Registration Services available 99% of the time (40k users on the portal each month)
- All staff enabled to work remotely.

What we have learned in 2020-21:

- A QI approach to reviewing specific business functions/activities can lead to positive change and improvements The system to support staff and managers in managing absences is fit for purpose
- It is important to use a range of methods to engage and involve staff in delivery of the business Health and wellbeing activities are having a positive impact on our staff, board and partners

Indicators of Success we have set out in our Business Plan for 2021-22

- Social Care Council is placed to retain its IIP status.
- Social Care Council has the right skills, structure and resources to support it over the next four years.
- Business Plan for 2021-22 is successfully delivered and the Social Care Council achieves its break even target at the end of the financial year.
- The Board receives assurance through audit and governance reports that the Social Care Council is delivering safe and effective governance.
- Staff are supported to engage in quality improvement activity within their own business area and as part of projects working across the organisation.
- Registrants, employers and others have access to an app, digital identity, online Portal and fully enabled IT to engage with us on their mobile phones and other devices.

Performance Analysis for 2020-21

Performance in Relation to Environmental Matters

The Statutory Duty for Sustainable Development applicable to public authorities is set out at section 25 of the Northern Ireland (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2006 and applies to all Northern Ireland Departments and District Councils.

The six priority areas are:

- Building a dynamic, innovative economy that delivers the prosperity required to tackle disadvantage and to lift communities out of poverty;
- Strengthening society so that it is more tolerant, inclusive and stable and permits positive progress in quality of life for everyone;
- Driving sustainable, long-term investment in key infrastructure to support economic and social development;
- Striking an appropriate balance between the responsible use and protection of natural resources in support of a better quality of life and a better quality environment;
- Ensuring a reliable, affordable and sustainable energy provision and reducing our carbon footprint;
- Ensuring the existence of a policy environment which supports the overall advancement of sustainable development in and beyond Government.

The Social Care Council remains committed to making an active contribution to those areas which it can influence. Prominence is therefore given to the way in which we conduct our work to minimise, where relevant, a negative impact on these duties, but more importantly to make sustainable improvements wherever possible.

A number of positive actions have been implemented:

- The Social Care Council secured an extension on its lease while it participates in the Belfast Optimisation Project to move to James House (currently scheduled for June 2022) alongside a number of other ALB's and organisations;
- Agile working is now in place with staff working remotely from home (as a result of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic) and this has reduced the need for travel to the workplace and meetings are taking place using video-conferencing software;
- As a result of agile working the production of printing and photocopying has reduced as staff use ICT support including One Note;
- The Social Care Council's Board also moved to digital working and use Decision Time software to manage their Board and other meetings;
- E-Resources – investment in the Learning Zone as an alternative to printed learning resources.

This has included clear procedures on the minimisation of waste, colour photocopying and paper production. The continued promotion of the online Portal has also led to almost negligible use of printed materials for registration application paperwork.

Personal and Public Involvement (PPI) Report for 2020-21

The Social Care Council is committed to working closely with people who use services and their carers to ensure they are supported in contributing their views and experiences to improve our business. The contribution of people who use social care services and carers is a valued and integral part of planning, implementing and reviewing all areas of work and projects across the organisation.

The Participation Partnership is chaired by a Board member and comprises people who access social care services and those who are carers. Their role is to challenge, influence and advise the work of the Social Care Council, ensuring that people who use social care services and their carers are involved and have an opportunity to shape and contribute to all of our work. The group are supported by the Director of Registration and Corporate Services, together with a small group of other staff. These staff ensure that the members are supported in all areas of their work. Participation members are committed to meeting at least every three months and they report back to the Board on their progress. They agree their own agenda and all meetings are noted. The Social Care Council recognises the significant amount of personal time and expertise contributed by the Participation members, which provides assurance that all activities are focused on the needs and experiences of those who use social care services.

Although members were unable to meet in person during the year, they worked together so that meetings and working groups could be adapted to use Zoom, telephone calls and circulation of printed materials. The flexible approach of the members ensured that the connections and relationships that are fundamental to delivering on our shared Participation agenda were sustained. As well as engaging in the Business agenda for the Social Care Council, Participation members shared their experiences of how COVID-19 was impacting on them in receiving services, or in caring for someone. These first-hand reports provided rapid insight for those planning and delivering social care services.

Highlights from 2020-21:

- Business Plan development for 2021-22 – Participation Forum members fed back their views on the draft Business Plan and shared views about how the new Corporate Strategy could be developed to engage people who use services and their carers.
- Landscape Review of the Social Care Council (Dept. of Health review) - Members met with the Senior Leadership Team to provide detailed feedback on the proposals within the Landscape Review to ensure that the voice of service users and carers is reflected in strategic developments for social care and the future direction of the Social Care Council.
- Workshop with Workforce Development Team to review the workplan for 2020-21 and identify the key pieces of work Participation Partnership will be directly involved in and where evidence of appropriate engagement with Service Users and Carers will be sought to support workforce education, training and development activity... This will be extended to the 2021/22 Plan.
- Members worked with the Social Care Council staff in the initial approval and ongoing review of the Open University Social Work Degree in NI.
- One member wrote a chapter for a social workbook about service user engagement in education. Members are also involved in workshops which are delivered with social work students on their course.
- Joint presentation with the Head of Workforce Development to the International Association of Schools of Social Work Conference (online).
- Participation Partnership has been instrumental in reviewing materials produced by the Social Care Council to support them in delivering on their aspiration to use straightforward language and produce more accessible information.

Personal and Public Involvement (PPI) Report for 2020-21

Throughout the year, members have participated in external meetings and events - both through their own networks and the Forum to help maintain links with social work education, HSC Personal and Public Involvement work, HSC Quality Improvement and the Patient Client Council membership Forums.

Looking ahead, the members recognise that social workers and social care workers face immense challenges as we, hopefully, begin to move out of lockdown and into a period of recovery. This will require Government and the Department of Health to learn from the experiences of service users and carers and from frontline staff. The Participation members will support and challenge the Social Care Council to make sure that change is driven by the experience and knowledge of service users and carers. The Participation Partnership looks forward to playing a key role in the development of the Social Care Council 2022-26 Corporate Plan.

Performance Analysis – Objectives and Key Performance Indicators

On 19 March 2020, the Northern Ireland Social Care Council transferred all business operations to be delivered via remote working as a response to provide a safe and effective service during the COVID-19 lockdown period. This continued throughout 2020-21 Business Year. Business continuity was co-ordinated by the Command and Control Team, with achievement of critical business objectives, including staff well-being, being monitored and reported at online meetings and in weekly highlight reports.

The 2020-21 Business Plan was delivered against 24 objectives and 11 KPIs. Progress against Business Plan objectives was monitored by the Leadership Team throughout the year. Business Snapshots for staff, monthly performance reports for the Senior Leadership Team and Quarterly reports for the Social Care Council Board included successes, opportunities for improvement and details of mitigating action undertaken for areas that were at risk of not meeting required outcomes.

The Command and Control Team is satisfied that delivery of the 24 objectives and performance against the 11 KPIs set out in the 2020-21 Business Plan meet the standards required to confirm achievement of year end outcomes in line with the 2017-21 Corporate Plan despite the challenges of delivering our services remotely.

- 7 KPIs met the required standard (in month and cumulative performance)
- 4 KPIs were marginally below the required standard (Registration Processing at 95%, Triage FtP referrals at 99%, Conclusion of Fitness to Practise cases within 15 months at 86% and Staff Absence at 3.6%.

Additional information is included below.

Theme 2 Registration - Social Workers & Social Care Workers		Cumulative Performance
1. We will process 100% of completed applications/renewals within 20 working days of submission. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1,267 applications and renewals processed in March • 11,534 applications processed during 2020-21 • 1,547 applications in system at closing 		Cumulative 95%
Theme 2 Regulation - Social Workers & Social Care Workers		Cumulative Performance
2. We will update the register for all Fitness to Practise decisions within 2 working days of receipt of the information. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9 registrations updated in March (100% were updated within 2 working days) • 68 registrations updated during 2020-21 		Cumulative 100%
3. We will triage all referrals to the Fitness to Practise Team within 3 working days. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 34 referrals received and assessed in March • 440 referrals received during 2020-21 (437 were triaged within three working days) 		Cumulative 99%
4. We will conclude 100% of Interim Order hearings within 4 weeks of referral. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 New Interim Order hearings concluded in March • 38 New Interim Orders concluded during 2020-21 (100% were updated 4 weeks of referral). 53 Interim Orders in place and kept under review 		Cumulative 100%
5. We will conclude 90% of Fitness to Practise cases within 15 months of opening e. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 23 cases closed in March • 293 cases closed during 2020-21 (219 were concluded within 15 months) • Resources have been sourced to support recruitment of additional FtP Officers. One post has been filled and a second recruitment exercise is in progress 		Cumulative 86%

Performance Analysis – Objectives and Key Performance Indicators

Theme 2 Regulation - Social Work Education		Cumulative Performance
<p>6. We will complete 100% of Quality Assurance processes for social work education and training within timeframes agreed with providers and identify recommendations for improvement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning ongoing for safe and effective delivery of social work courses and Practice Learning opportunities • QA programme ongoing (Degree, Practice Learning and PiP) • Approval Panels reviewed new Programmes/Programme updates: • AYE Audit completed for 2020 – requirements were satisfied • PRTL Audit completed (deferred from June to Dec 2020 during COVID) 		Cumulative 100%
Infrastructure - People		Cumulative Performance
<p>7. We will ensure our staff absence levels do not exceed 3.5% during the year</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was an increase in absence over December and January however this reduced in February). At year end, staff absence was marginally above KPI at 3.6%. • Staff well being continues to be a focus for managers. All staff are being supported to engage in the 'Empowering You' programme in 2021-22 to assist in personal development and wellbeing. 		Cumulative 3.6%
Infrastructure Finance		Cumulative Performance
<p>8. We will ensure we achieve the minimum standard of paying 95% of undisputed invoices within 30 days 1,109 invoices were paid within 30 days (from a total number of invoices of 1,120 within the 12 month period).</p>		Cumulative 99%
<p>9. We will ensure we achieve the minimum standard of paying 75% of undisputed invoices within the 10 day prompt payment target. 1,052 invoices were paid within 10 days (from a total number of invoices of 1,120 within the 12 month period).</p>		Cumulative 94%
<p>10. We will manage our finances to achieve financial breakeven target of 0.25% or £20k (whichever is greater). Following a total of 10 separate allocation letters in 2021 and the impact of COVID 19, and fee income collection, we have a breakeven achieved with a surplus of £11k.</p>		Cumulative 11k
Infrastructure Systems		Cumulative Performance
<p>11. We will ensure the Online Registration Portal is available at least 98% of time during the year</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • System performed well throughout the period. Portal was stable with 99% uptime in most months. • 46k sessions served on the online registration portal and 300k page views in March • 500k sessions service during 2020-21 		Cumulative 99%

Performance Analysis – Objectives and Key Performance Indicators

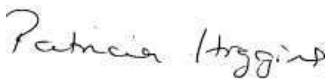
Positioning

Based on these performance reports, I can confirm that the Social Care Council is well placed to deliver a strong and reliable performance during the next business year. We recognised that there may be some adaptations needed as we continue to prioritise and deliver our business in response to the demands and constraints placed on operations by the COVID-19 pandemic. The organisation has a highly skilled workforce, who are strongly motivated to deliver quality services and who are well supported to enable them to work flexibly to meet business needs.

We are committed to supporting front line workers in social work and social care. We will continue to develop online learning and supports and ensure that those coming back to work in social work or social care can be registered quickly and safely.

The Leadership Teams will continue to review the needs and demands for our services and will ensure that feedback from stakeholders will shape our perspective on our priorities and ambitions.

I will ensure that the Social Care Council listens to those priorities and ambitions to make sure we continue to work with and for our stakeholders.



Patricia Higgins,
Interim Chief Executive, Northern Ireland Social Care Council

Date: 14 July 2021

Section 2: Accountability Report

Corporate Governance Report - Director's Report

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council was established in October 2001 under the Health and Personal Social Services Act (NI) 2001. It is a Non-Departmental Public Body sponsored by the Department of Health. The Social Care Council is helping to raise standards in social care through the registration of the social work and social care workforce and setting standards for their conduct, training and practice. In doing so, the Social Care Council engages with a variety of stakeholders, including those who use social care services, carers, the social care workforce, employers, training providers and government agencies. The Social Care Council also works collaboratively with its counterparts in England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland.

The Social Care Council is a partner in Skills for Care and Development (SfCD), a Sector Skills Council responsible for social care and children's services throughout the UK. Sector Skills Councils are independent, UK-wide organisations licensed by the Department for Education and Skills to support employers in the training and development of the workforce.

The Social Care Council is led by a Board which comprises a Chair and 12 non-Executive Members who have responsibility for ensuring the Board's strategic policies as agreed with the DoH are successfully delivered. Details of the Board's structure and its membership can be found at Appendix 1 of this Annual Report.

The organisational structure is headed by a Chief Executive who is also the designated Accounting Officer (this position is currently held on an interim appointment). She is supported by two Directors the Director of Registration and Corporate Services, and the Director of Regulation and Standards. The organisational structure can be found at Appendix 2.

The overall vision for the Social Care Council focuses on improving standards in social work and social care. This vision will be achieved through the delivery of our core values:

Promoting respect; Working with integrity; Partnership working; and Excellence.

Equality

The Social Care Council is committed to promoting equality of opportunity for all. Details of good practice and training initiatives, including those relating to disability issues are outlined in the Annual Equality Progress Report which can be found on its website at www.niscc.info. The Social Care Council has an Equal Opportunity Policy in place that covers all aspects of equality within employment, including the obligations of the organisation under disability discrimination legislation and protecting the rights and interests of Section 75 groups.

Staff Communication

A range of methods are used to communicate with staff. These include monthly team meetings which enable the sharing of corporate information together with updates on business and team performance, and team development. Monthly staff 'Townhall' meetings are held to encourage staff teams to share information about the work that they do. The staff intranet is updated regularly to help staff to access useful information such as policies and procedures in one place, together with an interactive calendar and group forums.

The Social Care Council also holds information sessions every quarter to openly discuss matters which impact the organisation such as funding pressures, business delivery and strategic policy directions. An internal e-newsletter is also published on a regular basis which keeps staff informed about business matters and other events.

Director's Report

Budget Position and Authority

The Assembly passed the Budget Act (Northern Ireland) 2021 in March 2021 which authorised the cash and use of resources for all departments and their Arms' Length Bodies for the 2020-21 year, based on the Executive's final expenditure plans for the year. The Budget Act (Northern Ireland) 2021 also authorised a Vote on Account to authorise departments and their Arms' Length Bodies' access to cash and use of resources for the early months of the 2021-22 financial year. This will be followed by the 2021-22 Main Estimates and the associated Budget (No. 2) Bill before the summer recess which will authorise the cash and resource balance to complete for the remainder of 2021-22 based on the Executive's 2021-22 Final Budget"

Public Sector Payment Policy – Measure of Compliance

The Social Care Council fully met the standards set out for better payments practice. 99% of undisputed invoices were paid within 30 days and 94% were paid within 10 days.

Information Governance

BSO provides services to the Social Care Council to assist with fulfilling responsibilities for General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). All staff have completed the mandatory e-learning module to ensure they are aware of their role in fulfilling GDPR requirements. There was one data breach during the year and this was reported to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). A full investigation was carried out and recommendations put in place. The ICO confirmed they were satisfied with the action taken by the Social Care Council in response to the incident.

Health and Safety at Work

The Social Care Council has an approved Health and Safety at Work Policy. The organisation complies with the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work (NI) Order 1978 and all other relevant health and safety legislation and codes of practice. We are committed to ensuring so far as is reasonably practicable the health, safety and welfare of employees and of others who may be affected by our operations. Expert advice and support on health and safety legislation and codes of practice is provided through a Service Level Agreement with the Business Services Organisation.

The Health, and Wellbeing Committee, which reports to the Senior Leadership Team has a responsibility to promote measures which ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of staff at work. The Committee has representation from all teams and meets quarterly to plan and deliver Health and Wellbeing activities. The Social Care Council has access to the HSC Occupational Health Service. In addition, a programme of employee assistance and confidential counselling is made available through the Inspire Workplace organisation.

Complaints

The Social Care Council received one written complaint about its services during 2020-21. The complaint was not upheld. None of the complaints received were escalated to the next internal stage for review. No complaints were received from the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman.

Audit Information

The Directors can confirm that there is no relevant audit information of which the auditors are aware. The Directors can also confirm that they have taken steps to ensure that they are aware of relevant audit information and to establish that the HSC body's auditors are aware of the information.

Long Term Expenditure

The Social Care Council receives its financial allocation on a year to year basis from the Department of Health (DoH) and any long term expenditure pressures identified by the Social Care Council are managed through the DoH.

Director's Report

Senior Leadership Team

The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) is responsible for ensuring all of the Social Care Council's business areas meet corporate, governance and legislative requirements for public accountability and value for money.



Patricia Higgins
Interim Chief Executive



Declan McAllister
Director of Registration
& Corporate Services



Marian O'Rourke
Interim Director of Regulation
& Standards

Patricia Higgins (Interim Chief Executive) has overall responsibility for the Social Care Council. She works with the Chair of the Social Care Council's Board and the Board Members in the delivery of the Social Care Council's strategic direction, leadership and accountability.

Declan McAllister (Director of Registration and Corporate Services) has responsibility for the Registration function and for Corporate Services, which includes Finance, HR, IT Development, Procurement, Estates and Governance.

Marian O'Rourke (Interim Director of Regulation and Standards) has responsibility for regulation of social work education and training at qualifying level and the Professional in Practice CPD framework for social workers, development of the social work and social care workforces.

Director's Report

Northern Ireland Social Care Council Board

Board Membership reflects three broad interest groups:

Lay People: People who have direct experience as a user of social care services, as a carer, or of unpaid work in the voluntary or community sector.

Registrants: People who are social care workers, eligible for inclusion in the Social Care Register.

Stakeholders: People who must be directly involved in the commissioning or delivery of social care services, the delivery of education and training in social care or as a representative of a trade union, professional or other regulatory body concerned with health and social care, or be a member of the legal profession.

All Members are appointed in a personal capacity because of the skills and experience they possess.

The Board is chaired by Mr Paul Martin and he is supported by 11 Board Members –

**Noelle Barton
Sarah Browne
Roslyn Dougherty
Gerard Guckian
David Hayes**

**Christine Hunter
Brenda Maitland
Jacqueline McGarvey
Catherine McPhillips
Anne O'Reilly
Lee Wilson**

Mr Paul Martin, was appointed as Chair of the Northern Ireland Social Care Council on 1 April 2018 following a public appointments exercise which was managed by the Public Appointments Unit. Board Members are listed at Appendix 1.

The Board meets four times a year to consider issues of strategy and accountability. The meetings of the Board are held in open session and are advertised on our website. The agenda and minutes of Board meetings are published on the Social Care Council's website www.niscc.info The Board also have strategic days during the year to focus on key areas of work and strategy, for example when developing the Corporate Plan.

The Board carried out a 'Board Self-Assessment' during 2020-21 to ensure itself that it demonstrates good practice in all areas of governance and accountability and developed an action plan to strengthen and improve its governance arrangements. This is reported in the Governance Statement contained within this Annual Report and Accounts for 2020-21.

The Social Care Council holds a Register of Directors' Interests which contains the declared interests of both Executive and Non-Executive Directors. This is available by contacting the Chief Executive's Office at the Northern Ireland Social Care Council, 7th Floor Millennium House, 25 Great Victoria Street, Belfast, BT2 7AQ, Tel 028 9536 2600

Director's Report

Northern Ireland Social Care Council Committees

The Board has established two Committees to support it in the delivery of its strategic functions, each of which is chaired by a Board Member:

- **The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee** (chaired by Gerry Guckian) assists the Board in the discharge of its functions by providing independent and objective review of the Social Care Council's control systems, financial information to the Board, risk management and information governance processes, compliance with the law, guidance and Standards of Conduct and Practice, and governance processes. The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Report which forms part of this Annual Report can be found on page 61.
- **The Remuneration Committee** (chaired by Mr Paul Martin) advises the Board about appropriate remuneration and terms of service for the Chief Executive. It meets twice a year.

Northern Ireland Social Care Council Partnerships

The Board has established a number of Partnerships to inform and deliver its wide range of business and to provide structured arrangements for stakeholder engagement and involvement:

- **Participation Forum** consists of people who use social care services and carers, and its role is to challenge, influence and advise the work of the Social Care Council.
- **Registrants Forum** consists of registrants and workforce representatives and its role is to ensure effective engagement with and by Registrants in the work of the Social Care Council.
- **Leaders in Social Care Partnership** (previously called the Workforce Development Partnership) was reformed during the year with a focus on supporting the transformation and development of the social care workforce in Northern Ireland.
- **Professional in Practice (PiP) Partnership** consists of social work employers and Higher Education Institutions (HEI's) who are key to the delivery of the PiP Framework.



Patricia Higgins,
Interim Chief Executive, Northern Ireland Social Care Council

Date: 14 July 2021

Corporate Governance Report - Statement of Accounting Officer Responsibilities

Accounts for the Year Ended 31 March 2021

Under the Health and Personal Social Services Act (Northern Ireland) 2001, the Department of Health has directed the Northern Ireland Social Care Council to prepare for each financial year a statement of accounts in the form and on the basis set out in the Accounts Direction. The accounts are prepared on an accruals basis and must provide a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Northern Ireland Social Care Council and of its income and expenditure, Statement of Financial Position and cash flows for the financial year.

In preparing the accounts the Accounting Officer is required to comply with the requirements of the Government Financial Reporting Manual (FReM) and in particular to :

- observe the Accounts Direction issued by the Department of Health, including the relevant accounting and disclosure requirements, and apply suitable accounting policies on a consistent basis;
- make judgements and estimates on a reasonable basis;
- state whether applicable accounting standards as set out in FReM have been followed, and disclose and explain any material departures in the accounts;
- prepare the accounts on a going concern basis; and
- confirm that the Annual Report and Accounts as a whole is fair, balanced and understandable and take personal responsibility for the Annual Report and Accounts and the judgements required for determining that it is fair, balanced and understandable

The Permanent Secretary of the Department of Health as Principal Accounting Officer for Health and Social Care Resources in Northern Ireland has designated Patricia Higgins of the Northern Ireland Social Care Council as the Interim Accounting Officer for the Northern Ireland Social Care Council. The responsibilities of an Accounting Officer, including responsibility for the regularity and propriety of the public finances for which the Accounting Officer is answerable, for keeping proper records and for safeguarding the Northern Ireland Social Care Council's assets, are set out in the formal letter of appointment of the Accounting Officer issued by the Department of Health, Chapter 3 of Managing Public Money Northern Ireland (MPMNI) and the HM Treasury Handbook: Regularity and Propriety.

As the Accounting Officer, I have taken all the steps that I ought to have taken to make myself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the Northern Ireland Social Care Council's auditors are aware of that information. So far as I am aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the auditors are unaware.

Corporate Governance Statement 2020-21

Corporate Governance Report - Governance Statement 2020-21

1. Introduction / Scope of Responsibility

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council (Social Care Council) is accounting for internal control. As Accounting Officer and Interim Chief Executive of the Social Care Council, I have responsibility for maintaining a sound system of internal governance that supports the achievement of the organisation's policies, aims and objectives, whilst safeguarding the public funds and assets for which I am responsible in accordance with the responsibilities assigned to me by the Department of Health (DoH).

The Social Care Council is an Arm's-Length Body, sponsored by the DoH and works in partnership with all the Health and Social Care (HSC) organisations including the other Regional Organisations sponsored by the DoH. In particular the Social Care Council has a Memorandum of Understanding with the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA) to enable it to properly fulfil its role as a regulator of the social care workforce, and information sharing protocols are in place with the other Social Care Councils in England, Wales and Scotland. The Social Care Council also works closely with CORU, the Social Work and Social Care regulator in the Republic of Ireland, to share best practice in regulation and registration of social workers and social care workers.

The Social Care Council has a Management Statement and Financial Memorandum in place which sets out the strategic control framework within which the Social Care Council is required to operate, and the conditions under which government funds are provided as detailed in Government Accounting Northern Ireland. The Accounting Officer and Chair of the Social Care Council apprise the DoH at the highest level of engagement through twice-yearly Accountability Meetings, and at the same time the Social Care Council works in partnership with the DOH Government Liaison Officer to ensure operational and strategic issues are raised appropriately with the DoH throughout the year. It is noted that due to COVID-19 impact the DOH have stood down the year end accountability meeting for 2020-21.

As part of the HSC sector, the Social Care Council is expected to face significant financial challenges and therefore extensive budget planning work to support the 2021-22 financial plan is ongoing between the Social Care Council and the DoH. Overall, however, and in line with other financial years, the Social Care Council remains on course to achieve financial break-even.

The Social Care Council, alongside other organisations, is also managing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on its business and ensuring essential/front line services are supported during this difficult time including planning for the resumption of normal business during 2021-22. An appropriate financial governance process has been put in place to manage resources associated with COVID-19 expenditure such as additional IT hardware and software to support remote working.

2. Compliance with Corporate Governance Best Practice

The Board applies the principles of good practice in Corporate Governance and continues to further strengthen its governance arrangements. The Board does this by undertaking continuous assessment of its compliance with Corporate Governance best practice through completion of an annual Board self-assessment. The Board completed its self-assessment for year ended 31 March 2021 and updated the Action Plan which it will continue to review at least annually to ensure continual improvement in governance and best practice.

The Board agreed that –

- 15 indicators were assessed as Green (all good practices are in place);
- 2 indicators were assessed as Amber/Green;
- 0 indicators were assessed as Red.

Governance Statement

The summary for the Board's self-assessment is set out below.

Indicator		Board's Assessment	
1.	Board Composition and Commitment		
1.1	Board positions and size	Green	
1.2	Balance and calibre of Board members	Amber	Green
1.3	Role of the Board	Green	
1.4	Committees of the Board	Green	
1.5	Board member commitment	Green	
2.	Board Evaluation, Development and Learning		
2.1	Effective Board level evaluation	Green	
2.2	Whole Board development programme	Green	
2.3	Board induction, succession and contingency planning	Amber	Green
2.4	Board member appraisal and personal development	Green	
3.	Board Insight and Foresight		
3.1	Board performance reporting	Green	
3.2	Efficiency and Productivity	Green	
3.3	Environmental and strategic focus	Green	
3.4	Quality of Board papers and timeliness of information	Green	
3.5	Assurance and risk management	Green	
4.	Board Engagement and Involvement		
4.1	External stakeholders	Green	
4.2	Internal stakeholders	Green	
4.3	Board profile and visibility	Green	

The two areas assessed as Amber/Green were in relation to –

- The number of Board Members with technical experience – in the Social Care Council only one Board Member has financial experience and this has been raised with the Department of Health and the Public Appointments Unit; and
- The induction of Board Members – Additional induction for Board members took place in the areas of finance and governance and a specific induction for members of the Remuneration Committee. Further work is being reviewed to improve the induction experience for all new Board Members.

3. Governance Framework

The Board provides strategic leadership to the Social Care Council and comprises a Chair and 12 Members who are a combination of registrants, lay members and others who are key stakeholders in social care services. Operational responsibilities are delivered by the Chief Executive. The duties and functions of the Chair and Board Members are set out in the Management Statement and Financial Memorandum and also in the Social Care Council's Standing Orders, Scheme of Delegation and Standing Financial Instructions.

The Board reviewed the Management Statement and Financial Memorandum (MSFM) in conjunction with the DOH during 2017. Meetings of the Board were held in open session four times during the year with an additional two Extraordinary meetings convened in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and records are maintained of the Board attendance. In addition, the Board held four Strategic Planning Sessions.

Governance Statement

During 2020-21 the Board attendance for all sessions was:

Chair/ Member	Attendance at Board During 2020-21 (%)
Paul Martin, Chair	100%
Noelle Barton, Member	83.3%
Neil Bodger, Member ¹	100%
Sarah Browne, Member	100%
Roslyn Dougherty, Member	100%
Gerry Guckian, Member	83.3%
David Hayes, Member	83.3%
Christine Hunter, Member	100%
Brenda Maitland, Member	75%
Jacqueline McGarvey, Member	100%
Catherine McPhillips, Member	100%
Anne O'Reilly, Member	83.3%
Lee Wilson, Member	100%

Overall this represents a 91.8% attendance rate when taken collectively over the year.

Attendance at Board Strategic Days, Committees and Partnerships during 2020-21 is set out below:

	Board Strategic	Audit & Risk Assurance Committee	Remuneration Committee	Participation Forum	Leaders in Social Care Partnership	Professional in Practice Partnership	Registrants' Forum
FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS IN 2020/21	4	4	2	4	7	3	3
P Martin	100%	N/A	100%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
N Barton	100%	N/A	N/A	100%	N/A	N/A	N/A
N Bodger	Not in post	N/A	100% ²	N/A	100% ¹	N/A	N/A
S Browne	100%	N/A	100% ³	N/A	100%	N/A	N/A
R Dougherty	100%	N/A	⁴ 100%	N/A	N/A	66.6%	N/A
G Guckian	75%	75%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
D Hayes	50%	N/A	N/A	75%	N/A	N/A	N/A
C Hunter	100%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	100%	66.6%
B Maitland	100%	100%	N/A	75%	N/A	N/A	N/A
J McGarvey	100%	100%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	100%
C McPhillips	100%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	100%	N/A
A O'Reilly	75%	N/A	N/A	N/A	100%	N/A	N/A
Lee Wilson	100%	75%	100%	50%	N/A	N/A	N/A

(Please note: the table above indicates member's % attendance in relation to the number of meetings they were eligible to attend).

¹ Appointment commenced July 2015 and ended 17th July 2020

² In post for June 2020 Remuneration Committee meeting only

³ Membership commenced September 2020

⁴ Appointment ended July 2020

Governance Statement

The Board's performance is reviewed as part of the annual Board Self-Assessment and the performance appraisal system.

The Board has established two statutory Committees to support it in the delivery of its strategic functions:

- The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee is chaired by a Member of the Board of the Social Care Council and assists the Board in the discharge of its functions by providing independent and objective review of the Social Care Council's control systems, financial information to the Board, risk management processes, compliance with law, guidance and Codes of Conduct, and governance processes; and
- The Remuneration Committee is chaired by the Chair of the Social Care Council and advises the Board about appropriate remuneration and terms of service for the Chief Executive.

The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee carries out an annual self-assessment and develops an action plan to address any areas where performance could be improved or enhanced.

4. Business Planning, Risk Management and Fraud

Business planning and risk management are at the heart of governance arrangements to ensure that statutory obligations and ministerial priorities are properly reflected in the management of business at all levels within the organisation.

Business Planning

The Social Care Council has a four-year Corporate Plan following engagement with staff and stakeholders including, in particular, people who use social care services and carers as is described in the Social Care Council's Personal and Public Involvement (PPI) Consultation Scheme.

Due to the impact of COVID 19 the Department of Health has requested that all Business Plans and Corporate plans are rolled forward as there will be no formal Departmental approval process and that any revisions to plans are shared with the Sponsoring unit for Information only.

The current Corporate Plan takes account of recent developments in social care strategy including the Minister of Health's strategy 'Health and Wellbeing 2026'. The Corporate Plan describes at a strategic level how the Social Care Council will deliver on its overarching aim and strategic outcomes as a regulator of the social care workforce and the outcomes which it expects as a result. The Corporate Plan is available on the Social Care Council's website.

At the same time, the Social Care Council develops an annual Business Plan which provides further detail on how the Social Care Council will deliver its Corporate Plan, focusing on the outcomes of delivering its objectives. The same process of engagement and consultation is applied as with the development of the Corporate Plan. The Business Plan is approved by the Board and ultimately by the DoH before being circulated and published. The Social Care Council has taken the decision to provide a revised business plan for the new financial year and will share the finalised plan with the DOH Sponsoring Unit. The Corporate Plan and Business Plan are compliant with the requirements set out in the Council's Management Statement and Financial Memorandum. The corporate planning process is led by the Director of Registration and Corporate Services while the Chief Executive has overall responsibility for delivering the Corporate and Business Plans, and is supported by her Directors and operational team.

Governance Statement

To give effect to the Corporate and Business Plans, the Social Care Council develops an Operational Plan and Key Performance Indicators. This ensures that all staff can clearly understand their role in delivering the Social Care Council's objectives, and ensures that their own personal and team objectives and learning plans are aligned to the Council's business objectives. The Operational Plan and Business Plan are reviewed on a quarterly basis by Senior Managers which informs reporting to the Senior Leadership Team and ultimately to the Board.

A Business Performance Management Report is presented to the Board for scrutiny at each of their meetings detailing how the Social Care Council is performing against its annual Business Plan. This includes further assurance reports such as an evaluation of the Social Care Council's delivery of its strategic outcomes; financial monitoring reports; and reports associated with workforce registration and regulation.

The Board agrees its work programme for the year to make best use of both its open sessions and strategic planning sessions.

Ultimately, the Social Care Council accounts for its business performance through the production of its Annual Report and Accounts which are laid before the NI Assembly and published on the Social Care Council's website. It also reports how it delivers against Quality 2020 in a separate Annual Quality Progress Report which is again available on the website.

Risk Management

The Chief Executive has overall responsibility to the Board for risk management. Leadership on risk is provided through the Board with delegated authority to the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee which is chaired by a Board Member and is supported by the Director of Registration and Corporate Services. The Risk Management process seeks to identify risks in accordance with best practice as well as providing a system for embedding risk management throughout the Social Care Council. The Board set the strategic risks and risk appetite for the organisation which are set out in the Social Care Council's Risk Management Strategy. The Board also approve and have oversight of the Social Care Council's Assurance Framework.

All staff receive training on risk management and are required to complete an e-learning module on risk management awareness and are also provided with detailed Risk Management Procedures. In addition risk management training forms part of induction for all new staff.

The Social Care Council has been able to effectively manage its risk profile throughout the year by identifying the risk appetite relevant to the risk and its associated mitigating actions which are set out in its Risk Register and Assurance Framework. (Overview of the Risk Appetite Statement and Matrix are included in Appendix 3)

Risk Management Framework

The Social Care Council ensures effective risk management is embedded as part of its culture and throughout the organisation. It has a Risk Management Strategy which describes how risks (and near misses) should be managed, elevated, and controlled, including evaluating the value of inherent and residual risks. The Social Care Council has also developed detailed Risk Management Procedures which break down how to report and manage risks for all staff.

The Social Care Council details its risks through a Risk Register and Assurance Framework which are formally reviewed on a quarterly basis by the Risk Management Committee (chaired by the Director of Registration and Corporate Services), which in turn reports to the Senior Leadership Team, the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and ultimately to the Board as part of a quarterly Risk Progress Report. The risk register is maintained on a regular basis and updated through risk management software which assigns risk owners, controls and actions. The risks can be tracked through the software to establish how risks are being managed and mitigated.

Governance Statement

The Risk Management Committee is also responsible for ensuring the overarching Risk Management Strategy is reviewed on a regular basis so that it reflects all aspects of risk, governance and control. The Risk Management Strategy was reviewed during the year to take account of the strategic direction being set by the Board in relation to strategic risks and risk appetite.

The Social Care Council works with Internal Audit to provide assurances and validation of its compliance in relation to risk management, and has a Business Continuity Strategy and Plan in place which is tested on an annual basis, with lessons learned being fed back into the overarching Risk Management Strategy.

Business Continuity

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Social Care Council activated its Command and Control Team now called the COVID Business Leadership Team (CBLT) as set out in its Business Continuity Plan. The Social Care Council also developed a Supplementary (or Surge) Plan to specifically support how it delivered front line support to the social care sector. The CBLT established meetings three times a week together with weekly business reports to monitor how it supports the sector, manages its business and performance, and supports its staff. A COVID-19 risk was also added to the risk register to regularly review the controls and actions in place to manage the business through the pandemic.

Fraud

The Social Care Council has a zero tolerance approach to fraud in order to protect and support our key public services. It has put in place a Fraud Policy Statement and Fraud Response Plan to outline the approach to tackling fraud, define staff responsibilities and the actions to be taken in the event of suspected or perpetrated fraud, whether originating internally or externally to the organisation. The Social Care Council has a Fraud Liaison Officer (FLO) whose role is to promote fraud awareness, coordinate investigations in conjunction with the Business Services Organisation (BSO) Counter Fraud and Probity Services team and provide advice to staff on fraud reporting arrangements. All staff are provided with mandatory fraud awareness training in support of the Fraud Policy Statement and Fraud Response Plan, and during the year all staff complete the annual Fraud E-learning support resource.

5. Information Risk

Information Risk Management is an essential part of good governance. The Social Care Council ensures that information risk management is considered in its procedures and policies. Information Risk Management is managed within the context of the Social Care Council's Risk Management Strategy and Information Governance Strategy.

The Social Care Council holds a range of personal data in respect of registrants (c.52,000) and confidential data in respect of complaints against registrants. It also holds a range of personal data in respect of staff and information which supports the running of the business. The Social Care Council maintains an Information Asset Register and Disposals Schedule which are reviewed regularly and any areas of non-compliance are brought to the attention of the Senior Information Risk Owner and Personal Data Guardian.

Specific roles in the Social Care Council have been identified to support it in managing risks to the organisation in respect of the information it may hold. These roles include:

- Personal Data Guardian
- Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO)
- Information Governance and Records Management Officer (IGRMO)
- Information Asset Owners (IAOs)

The Information Governance function is well embedded in the organisation and forms part of the remit of the Risk Management Committee as reflected in the Committee's Terms of Reference. The Director of Registration and Corporate Services chairs the Risk Management Committee and is also the Social

Governance Statement

Care Council's SIRO and Data Guardian. Due to the size and structure of the organisation the members of the Risk Management Committee (risk co-ordinators) are also the organisation's Information Asset Owners.

The Social Care Council receives its Records Management and Information Governance support through a Service Level Agreement with Information Governance Shared Services in the BSO. This includes the appointment of a Data Protection Officer to support the Social Care Council in its compliance with Information Access Requests and the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

The Social Care Council had one data breach incident in July 2020 which involved the release of endorser details in error via a system generated digital communication. A full internal investigation took place which included formal notification to the Information Commissioner and ongoing progress updates to the Senior Leadership team and the Board. An action plan was agreed which included additional controls and a system modification to remove the possibility of the same issue happening again. A formal notification of no further action was received from the Information Commissioner following the Social Care Council's notified evidence and actions taken.

A cyber security incident took place at Queen's University Belfast (QUB) in February 2021. As the HSC has multiple contractual interactions with QUB, some concerning personal information, the HSC technology teams, with the backing of the HSC SIRO's, took a number of actions to reduce potential disruption to HSC services, and continue to liaise with QUB on the impact of the cyber incident. The impact on the HSC is being fully investigated, and there may be a financial risk in relation to possible future liability, for potential claims for loss of personal data. As the breach occurred in a third party's systems the potential for liability is unclear and any financial impact is unquantifiable at present.

The Social Care Council has a number of policies and strategies in place that support its overall risk management agenda. These are:

- Information Governance Strategy
- Records Management Strategy
- Records Management Procedures
- Access to Information Policy
- Privacy Policy and Privacy Statement
- Disclosure Policy
- Clear Desk and Screen Policy
- Data Security Breach Management Policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- Data Quality Policy
- ICT Policy

6. Public Stakeholder Involvement

The Social Care Council's engagement with people who use services and their carers, and other stakeholders has been enshrined in its structure since its inception in 2001. In addition, the Social Care Council has a strategic objective to 'raise awareness and knowledge of the work of the Social Care Council and ensure its work is informed and influenced by people who use services and their carers, registrants, employers and other stakeholders'.

The Social Care Council published a Personal and Public Involvement Consultation Scheme which was developed by people who use social care services and carers, and was approved by the Board. Additionally it produced Principles of Participation, again in partnership with service users and carers.

Governance Statement

The Social Care Council has established a number of Partnerships to ensure inclusivity and involvement from the broadest range of people and stakeholders. These are:

- Participation Forum (comprising people who use social care services and carers)
- Registrants Forum (comprising registrants)
- Leaders in Social Care Partnership (comprising employers of the social care workforce)
- The Professional in Practice Partnership (comprising employers of social workers, Higher Education Institutions (HEI's), and other education providers who are key to the delivery of the PiP Framework).

These Partnerships meet regularly throughout the year and are kept informed of the Social Care Council business developments and issues raised at these meetings are brought to the attention of the Board who review the minutes of the meetings of the Partnerships. This holistic approach to engagement ensures that any risks identified by stakeholders are brought to the attention of the Board.

The Social Care Council ensures all papers presented to its Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and to the Board include a cover sheet which explains to what extent stakeholders have been engaged in the development of the paper/proposal and, where appropriate, how they influenced the outcome. The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and the Board can therefore clearly challenge the Social Care Council in how it has engaged people who use services and their carers, and other stakeholders in the development of policy and other initiatives.

7. Assurance

As part of its Governance arrangements, the Social Care Council considers the contents of both its Assurance Framework and Risk Register when identifying possible control issues.

The Social Care Council's Standing Orders require the setting up of an Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, as directed by HSS (PDD) 8/94 to reassure the Board that financial stewardship and corporate governance standards are being met. The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee maintains and reviews the effectiveness of the system of internal control for the Social Care Council. Full details of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, its role, terms of reference, and responsibilities can be found in the Standing Orders.

The Internal Audit Service for the Social Care Council is provided by the BSO. Internal Audit carries out its role by systematic review and evaluation of risk management, control and governance which comprises the policies, procedures and operations in place to:

- establish and monitor the achievement of the Social Care Council's objectives;
- identify, assess and manage the risks to achieving the Social Care Council's objectives;
- ensure the economical, effective and efficient use of resources;
- ensure compliance with established policies, procedures, laws and regulations; and
- safeguard the Social Care Council's assets and interests from losses of all kinds, including those arising from fraud, irregularity, bribery or corruption

The Board receives a wide range of papers for information and decision making purposes presented by Social Care Council's officers. This includes a Business Performance Management Report. The papers are of suitable quality to enable the Board to make informed decisions.

The Board is satisfied with the quality of the information received during the year and is satisfied that the information was sufficient to enable the Board to fulfil its obligations.

Governance Statement

End of Year Assurance

The Social Care Council Leadership Team provides an end of year assurance report to its Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and its Board on all of its areas of governance and control, using a RAG system to identify any areas where gaps in assurance and/or action is required. Any actions identified are managed through the Social Care Council's Risk Register and Risk Assurance Framework. This annual system replaced the previous Controls Assurance Standards which operated up to 2018.

8. Sources of Independent Assurance

The Social Care Council obtains Independent Assurance from the following sources:

- Internal Audit (as provided under a Service Level Agreement with BSO); and
- External Audit by the Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO).
- Other Independent Assurances

Internal Audit

The Social Care Council utilises an internal audit function which operates to defined standards and whose work is informed by an analysis of risk to which the body is exposed and annual audit plans are based on this analysis. Internal Audit has three assessment levels of assurance; Satisfactory, Limited and Unacceptable.

In 2020-21 Internal Audit reviewed the following systems:

- Workforce Development, providing a satisfactory assurance
- Financial Review, providing a satisfactory assurance
- Data and Intelligence Management, providing satisfactory assurance
- Governance during Covid 19, providing a satisfactory assurance.

In her annual report, the Internal Auditor reported that the Social Care Council's system of internal control was adequate and effective. There were no priority 1 weaknesses in control identified, however a number of priority 2 weaknesses were identified and action plans are in place to resolve all matters.

The priority 2 recommendations arising from the Work Force Development were in relation to reviewing a number of related policies and procedures and the development of a response to the Department of Health's Improvement and Learning Strategy 2019-2027.

The priority 2 recommendations arising from the Financial Review were in relation to the ensuring retrospective Direct Award Contracts in response to emergency COVID-19 work are in place, appropriate timing of payments to suppliers, updating the Organisational Structure on HRPTS and reviewing a policy related to home to base rules during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The priority 2 recommendations in relation to the Data and Intelligence Management were regarding working with the Department of Health to assist them in implementing the recent Landscape Review recommendations, Developing a process to triangulate intelligence received across the social care council, completing a data cleanse on the register following the impact of the DOH Interim Policy in response to COVID-19, putting in place a clear governance structure and process to manage data and intelligence requests.

There were no priority 1 or 2 recommendations in relation to the Governance management within the Social Care Council during COVID-19.

The Social Care Council has an action plan in place to deliver on each of the internal audit recommendations.

Governance Statement

External Audit

The Financial Statements of the Social Care Council are audited by the Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO) and the results of their audit are set out in their Annual Report to those Charged with Governance. A representative from the Northern Ireland Audit Office attends the Social Care Council's Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Meetings. The External Auditor is required to certify, examine and report on each of the Statements comprising the Financial Statements of the organisation. An unqualified audit opinion was provided in 2019-20.

Other Independent Assurances

The DOH commissioned a Landscape review conducted by an Associate of the Social Care Institute of Excellence (SCIE). The purpose of which was to take account of the broader strategic challenges and changing landscape of health and social care in Northern Ireland. The report has been presented to the Board of Council and confirms that the workforce regulator has a solid track record of delivery and is highly regarded by its partners and enjoys excellent relationships with all parts of the sector. As part of the review a number of recommendations for future development of the Social Care Council have been provided to the Department of Health. These recommendations will be considered as part of the development of a new four year corporate strategy for the Social Care Council.

9. Review of Effectiveness of the System of Internal Governance

As Accounting Officer, I have responsibility for the review of effectiveness of the system of internal governance. My review of the effectiveness of the system of internal governance is informed by the work of the internal auditors and the executive managers within the Social Care Council who have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal control framework, and comments made by the external auditors in their management letter and other reports. I have been advised on the implications of the result of my review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control by the Social Care Council, the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, and the Risk Management Committee, and a plan to address weaknesses and ensure continuous improvement to the system is in place.

10. Internal Governance Divergences

Internal Control Issues now Resolved 2019-20

Financial pressures for the Social Council remained a concern, with increased activity for the Fitness to Practise team and there was a need to consolidate its funding pressures both in-year and beyond. A business case seeking revenue funding to reduce the impact of the risk in relation to Fitness to Practise activity was approved by the Department of Health and funding was finally secured enabling the appointment of additional permanent staff to meet the increasing demand in activity.

Internal Control Issues 2020-21

Following the resignation of the Chief Executive during 2018-19, arrangements were put in place to fill this position through the appointment of an Interim Chief Executive, pending the outcome of a Landscape Review which was commissioned by the DoH. These interim arrangements remain in place. The Landscape Review has reported, however recruitment to the Chief Executive position is still in progress.

In response to COVID-19 the DOH introduced the interim policy decision to defer all registration fees and not to remove anyone from the register. The Social Care Council managed this interim change, however work is now underway to return the register to business as usual and requires additional engagement work with registrants and employers to support the Social Care Council in maintaining an accurate register.

Governance Statement

A number of audits have been conducted in BSO Shared Services, as part of the BSO Internal Audit Plan, including those for the Payroll Service Centre, Recruitment, Business Services and Accounts Payable. Limited Assurance was given in respect of Payroll Shared Services (Timesheets/Overpayments) and while these reports are the responsibility of BSO Management to take forward, the Social Care Council will keep these matters under review to ensure they do not adversely impact on the organisation.

With regard to the wider control environment, the Social Care Council has in place a range of organisational controls commensurate with the current assessment of risk which is designed to ensure the efficient and effective discharge of its business in accordance with the law and Departmental direction. Every effort is made to ensure that the objectives of the Social Care Council are pursued in accordance with the recognised and accepted standards of public administration.

11. EU Exit

The Social Care Council is working alongside the Department of Health and the other Arms-Length bodies following EU Exit. The Social Care Council is satisfied that it is able to operate its business effectively, however collaborative working with regulators across the UK and Ireland will continue to ensure the maintenance of standards and the right to work in Social Work and Social Care. This includes working with the Department of Health and ROI counterparts to help register ROI Social Workers and Social Care Workers who wish to work in Northern Ireland.

12. Conclusion

The Social Care Council has a rigorous system of accountability which I can rely on as Accounting Officer to form an opinion on the probity and use of public funds, as detailed in Managing Public Money NI (MPMNI).

Further to considering the accountability framework within the Social Care Council and in conjunction with assurances given to me by the Head of Internal Audit, I am content that the Social Care Council has operated a sound system of internal governance during the 2020-21 financial year.



Patricia Higgins
Interim Chief Executive
Northern Ireland Social Care Council

14 July 2021

Corporate Governance Report - Audit & Risk Assurance Committee Report

The Social Care Council's Audit and Risk Assurance Committee is made up of Board Members. The Committee met on the following dates during 2020-21:

- 13 May 2020
- 10 June 2020
- 7 October 2020
- 27 January 2021

During the 2020-21 financial year, membership of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee was as follows:

<i>APRIL 2020 – MARCH 2021</i>	<i>ATTENDANCE AT AUDIT & RISK ASSURANCE COMMITTEE (%)</i>
Mr Gerry Guickan	75%
Mrs Brenda Maitland	100%
Ms Jacqui McGarvey	100%
Mr Lee Wilson	100%

Internal Audit, External Audit and representatives from the Business Services Organisation (BSO) attend the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee. The Interim Chief Executive of the Social Care Council, Patricia Higgins, also attends when required along with the Director of Registration and Corporate Services, Declan McAllister and the Director of Regulation and Standards, Marian O'Rourke. Mr McAllister is the Executive Officer in attendance and is responsible for servicing the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee. The Government Liaison Officer (GLO) from the DoH also attends.

Membership of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee is consistent with the Social Care Council's Standing Orders.

During the 2020-21 financial year, the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee undertook the following tasks:

- Agreed an Internal Audit Plan;
- Considered an External Audit Strategy;
- Reviewed the Social Care Council's Assurance Framework;
- Reviewed the Social Care Council's Business Continuity Plan and Strategy and noted the findings of the organisation's business continuity exercise;
- Reviewed the organisation's Surge Plan in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic;
- Considered a number of reports in relation to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, including the management of the COVID risk on the risk register;
- Ensured the production of the Social Care Council's Final Accounts were in accordance with relevant statutory regulations;
- Considered the Social Care Council's mid-year Assurance Statement and Governance Statement;
- Reviewed a number of Internal Audit Reviews of key aspects of the Social Care Council's business during 2019-20;
- Considered the Report to Those Charged with Governance;

Governance Statement

- Reviewed the Social Care Council's Procurement Report, including the Contract Register and Direct Award Contract Report for 2019-20;
- Reviewed the Social Care Council's End of Year Assurance Report.

As part of its remit the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee can confirm, on reviewing the processes and related documents in relation to finance, risk, risk registers, governance and audit reports, that it is able to provide assurances to the Board and to the Interim Accounting Officer in relation to key statutory and accountability obligations.

Furthermore, the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee can provide assurance to the Board and the Interim Accounting Officer on key issues relating to the Governance Statement. This is based on the information provided to the Committee from Internal Audit, External Audit and from the Executive Team. The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee endorses the Assurance Framework which captures all risks, controls and gaps in controls and mitigating actions and this is presented to the Board by the Chair of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee.

The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee can further confirm that, on an annual basis, Internal Audit provide written confirmation to the Committee that all reviews performed are in accordance with applicable auditing standards. In doing so, the Chair and the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee present the final Accounts to the Board and the Interim Accounting Officer for approval. The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, facilitated by the Head of Internal Audit, completed the National Audit Office Audit Committee Self-Assessment Checklist, which is carried-out on an annual basis. As a result, the Council's Audit and Risk Assurance Committee confirmed its compliance with the good practice principles.

The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee was satisfied that during 2020-21, based on the information available to it, that:

- The assurances provided to it were comprehensive and reliable, and were of a sufficient standard to inform the decision making of the Board and of the Interim Accounting Officer;
- The assurances provided to it were suitably reflected in the Social Care Council's Risk Management process as necessary;
- It was suitably informed of any material issues that were pertinent to the Governance Statement;
- Appropriate financial reporting and information was in place;
- The work of Internal and External Audit was of a suitable quality and their approach to their responsibilities was appropriate.

Remuneration and Staff Report

Remuneration Report for year ended 31 March 2021 (Audited)

SCOPE OF THE REPORT

The Remuneration Report summarises the Remuneration Policy of the Northern Ireland Social Care Council and particularly its application in connection with senior managers. The Report also describes how the Northern Ireland Social Care Council applies the principles of good corporate governance in relation to senior executives' remuneration in accordance with HSS(SM) 3/2001 and subsequent supplements issued by the DoH.

Total remuneration includes salary, non-consolidated performance-related pay and benefits in kind. It does not include severance payments, employer pension contributions and the cash equivalent transfer value of pensions.

REMUNERATION COMMITTEE

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council's Board, as set out in its Standing Orders, has delegated certain functions to the Remuneration Committee, including assessing the performance of Senior Executives and, where permitted by the DoH, agreeing the discretionary level of performance related pay. The Remuneration Committee is chaired by the Chair, Mr Paul Martin. The Remuneration Committee is entirely comprised of Non-Executive Directors, namely, Neil Bodger and Lee Wilson. The Remuneration Committee met in this form in June 2020.

REMUNERATION POLICY

The salary, pension entitlement and the value of any taxable benefits in kind paid to both Executive and Non-Executive Directors is set out within this Report. None of the Executive or Non-Executive Directors of the Social Care Council received any other bonus or performance related pay in 2020-21.

Non-Executive Directors are appointed by the DoH under the Public Appointments process and the duration of such contracts is normally for a term of four years.

The overall objective of the Senior Executive remuneration arrangements is to achieve a fair, transparent, affordable and defensible pay and grading system for all Senior Executives employed across the HSC.

The main components of the arrangements are:

- pay and terms and conditions of service for the Chief Executive are determined by the DoH;
- the Chief Executive post is subject to evaluation by the DoH Evaluation Panel which is responsible for the management, maintenance and integrity of the evaluation process;
- pay ranges will be reviewed annually and the effective date for any extension of the pay ranges following review of the ranges by the Minister will be 1st April in the year of the review;
- there will be progression through the pay range subject to fully acceptable performance.

SERVICE CONTRACTS

HSC appointments are made on the basis of the merit principle in fair and open competition and in accordance with all relevant legislation and Circular HSS (SM) 3/2001. Unless otherwise stated, the employee/s covered by this Report are appointed on a permanent basis, subject to satisfactory performance.

Further information about the work of the Civil Service Commissioners can be found at www.nicscommissioners.org

Remuneration Report

The date of appointment for the Northern Ireland Social Care Council's Executive and Non-Executive Directors, and the Chair are set out below:

CHAIR

NAME	POSITION	DATE OF APPOINTMENT
Paul Martin	Chair	1 April 2018

NON-EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

NAME	POSITION	DATE OF APPOINTMENT
Neil Bodger	Council Member	18 July 2011
Noelle Barton	Council Member	1 April 2018
Sarah Browne	Council Member	1 April 2018
Roslyn Dougherty	Council Member	1 April 2018
David Hayes	Council Member	1 April 2018
Christine Hunter	Council Member	1 April 2018
Gerard Guckian	Council Member	1 May 2018
Brenda Maitland	Council Member	1 October 2014
Jacqueline McGarvey	Council Member	1 April 2018
Catherine McPhillips	Council Member	3 November 2014
Anne O'Reilly	Council Member	1 December 2014
Lee Wilson	Council Member	1 September 2014

EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

NAME	POSITION	DATE OF APPOINTMENT
Mrs Patricia Higgins	Interim Chief Executive	From 3 September 2018 (<i>substantive position Director of Regulation and Standards from 1 June 2002</i>)
Mr Declan McAllister	Director of Registration and Corporate Services	17 July 2017
Mrs Marian O'Rourke	Interim Director of Regulation and Standards	From 8 October 2018 (<i>substantive position Head of Workforce Development since 1 April 2014</i>)

NOTICE PERIODS

Three months' notice is to be provided by either party except in the event of summary dismissal. There is nothing to prevent either party waiving the right to notice or from accepting payment in lieu of notice.

RETIREMENT AGE

Currently, employees are required to retire at age 65 years and occupational pensions are normally effective from age 60 years. With effect from 1 October 2006, with the introduction of the Equality (Age) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006, employees are able to request to work beyond age 65 years.

COMPENSATION FOR PREMATURE RETIREMENT

In accordance with the DoH circular HSS (S) 11/83 and subsequent supplements, there is provision within the HSC Superannuation Scheme for premature retirement with immediate payment of superannuation benefits and compensation for eligible employees on the grounds of:

- Efficiency of the service
- Redundancy
- Organisational change

Remuneration Report

Section 16 of the Agenda for Change Terms and Conditions Handbook (issued on 14 February 2007 under cover of the Department's Guidance Circular HSS (AfC) (4) 2007) sets out the arrangements for early retirement on the grounds of redundancy and in the interest of the service. Further Circulars were issued by the Department HSS (AfC) (6) 2007 and HSS (AfC) (5) 2008 setting out changes to the timescale for the operation of the transitional protection under these arrangements.

Under the terms of Section 16 of the Agenda for Change Terms and Conditions Handbook individuals who were members of the HSC Superannuation Scheme prior to 1 October 2006, are over 50 years of age and have at least 5 years membership of the HSC Superannuation Scheme qualify for transitional protection. Staff who qualify for transitional protection are entitled to receive what they would have received by way of pension and redundancy payment had they taken redundancy retirement on 30 September 2006. This includes enhancement of up to 10 years additional service (reduced by the number of years between September 2006 and the actual date of retirement) and a lump sum redundancy payment of up to 30 weeks pay (reduced by 30% for each year of additional service over $6\frac{2}{3}$ years)

Alternatively, staff made redundant who are members of the HSC Pension Scheme, have at least two years "continuous service" and two years "qualifying membership" and have reached the minimum pension age currently 50 years can opt to retire early without a reduction in their pension as an alternative to a lump sum redundancy payment of up to 24 months. In this case the cost of the early payment of the pension is paid from the lump sum redundancy payment. However if the redundancy payment is not sufficient to meet the early payment of pension cost, the employer is required to meet the additional cost.

REPORTING OF EARLY RETIREMENT AND OTHER COMPENSATION SCHEME - EXIT PACKAGES

There were no exit packages during 2020-21 or 2019-20.

Staff Benefits

Refer to pages 69-72 of the accounts.

Remuneration Report**Senior Employees' Remuneration (Audited)**

The salary, pension entitlements and the value of any taxable benefits in kind of the most senior members of the Northern Ireland Social Care Council were as follows:

Single total figure of remuneration								
Name	Salary £000s		Benefits in kind (rounded to nearest £100)		Pension Benefits (rounded to nearest £1,000)		Total £000s	
	2020-21	2019-20	2020-21	2019-20	2020-21	2019-20	2020-21	2019-20
Non-Executive Members								
Paul Martin	15-20	15-20	-	-	-	-	15-20	15-20
Lee Wilson	5-10	5-10	-	-	-	-	5-10	5-10
Brenda Maitland	5-10	5-10	-	-	-	-	5-10	5-10
Catherine McPhillips	5-10	5-10	-	-	-	-	5-10	5-10
Anne O'Reilly	5-10	5-10	-	-	-	-	5-10	5-10
Jacqueline McGarvey	5-10	5-10	-	-	-	-	5-10	5-10
David Hayes	5-10	5-10	-	-	-	-	5-10	5-10
Sarah Browne	5-10	5-10	-	-	-	-	5-10	5-10
Gerard Guckian	5-10	5-10	-	-	-	-	5-10	5-10
Noelle Barton	5-10	5-10	-	-	-	-	5-10	5-10
Roslyn Dougherty	5-10	5-10	-	-	-	-	5-10	5-10
Christine Hunter	5-10	5-10	-	-	-	-	5-10	5-10
Neil Bodger*	0-2.5	5-10	-	-	-	-	0-2.5	5-10
Ruth Lavery**	-	0-5	-	-	-	-	-	0-5
Julie Erskine**	-	0-5	-	-	-	-	-	0-5
Geraldine Campbell**	-	0-5	-	-	-	-	-	0-5
James Perry **	-	0-5	-	-	-	-	-	0-5

* Neil Bodger last day of service was 31/07/20

**These Non-Executives received a back-dated pay award re. 2018-19 and they are not presently working as part of the Social Care Council's Board function

Remuneration Report**Remuneration Report - Senior Employees' Remuneration (Audited)**

Name	Salary £000s		Benefits in kind (rounded to nearest £100)		Pension Benefits (rounded to nearest £1000)		Total £000s	
	2020-21	2019-20	2020-21	2019-20	2020-21	2019-20	2020-21	2019-20
Executive Members								
Patricia Higgins	75-80	75-80	-	100	1	14	75-80	85-90
Declan McAllister	70-80	65-70	-	100	34	27	105-110	90-95
Marian O'Rourke	65-70	60-65	-	100	23	16	90-95	75-80

BONUSES

Bonuses are based on performance levels attained and are made as part of the appraisal process. Bonuses relate to the performance in the year in which they become payable to the individual. No bonuses were paid in 2020-21 or in 2019-20.

Remuneration Report

Remuneration Report - Pensions of Senior Management (Audited)

Name	Accrued pension at pension age as at 31/3/21 and related lump sum £000s	Real increase in pension and related lump sum at pension age £000s	CETV at 31/03/21 £000s	CETV at 31/03/20 £000s	Real increase in CETV £000s
Patricia Higgins	25-30 Plus lump sum 75-80	0-2.5 Plus lump sum of 2.5-5	632	621	11
Declan McAllister	20-25 Plus lump sum 45-50	0-2.5 Plus lump sum of 0-2.5	446	394	35
Marian O'Rourke	15-20 Plus lump sum of 0-2.5	0-2.5 Plus lump sum of 0-2.5	261	226	24

As Non-Executive members do not receive pensionable remuneration, there will be no entries in respect of pensions for Non-Executive members.

A Cash Equivalent Transfer Value (CETV) is the actuarially assessed capital value of the pension scheme benefits accrued by a member at a particular point in time. The benefits valued are the member's accrued benefits and any contingent spouse's pension payable from the scheme. A CETV is a payment made by a pension scheme, or arrangement to secure pension benefits in another pension scheme or arrangement when the member leaves a scheme and chooses to transfer the benefits accrued in their former scheme. The pension figures shown relate to the benefits that the individual has accrued as a consequence of their total membership of the pension scheme, not just their service in a senior capacity to which the disclosure applies. The CETV figures and the other pension details, include the value of any pension benefits in another scheme or arrangement which the individual has transferred to the HPSS pension scheme. They also include any additional pension benefit accrued to the member as a result of their purchasing additional years of pension service in the scheme at their own cost.

CETVs are calculated within the guidelines prescribed by the institute and Faculty of Actuaries.

Real Increase in CETV - This reflects the increase in CETV effectively funded by the employer. It takes account of the increase in accrued pension due to inflation, contributions paid by the employee (including the value of any benefits transferred from another pension scheme or arrangement) and uses common market valuation factors for the start and end of the period.

Fair Pay Statement

The Hutton Fair Pay Review recommended that, from 2011-12, all public service organisations publish their top to median pay multiples each year. The DoH issued Circular HSC (F) 23/2012 and subsequently issued Circular HSC (F) 23/2013, setting out a requirement to disclose the relationship between the remuneration of the most highly paid director in the organisation and the median remuneration of the organisation's workforce. Following application of the guidance contained in Circular (F) 23/2013, the following can be reported:

Disclosure	2020-21	2019-20
Band of the Highest Paid Director's Total Remuneration	75-80	75-80
Median Total Remuneration	31,365	23,131
Ratio	2.4368	2.98

Remuneration and Staff Report

Staff Report

Staff recruitment, employment, terms and conditions are managed through a service-level agreement with the Business Services Organisation. Appointments are made on the HSC 'Agenda for Change' paybands. Changes to staff policies, terms or conditions are consulted on and developed in collaboration with staff-side organisations and unions (Joint Negotiating Forum).

Training and Development

The Social Care Council values its staff and is committed to enhancing their skills and improving their contribution to the organisation's goals. Individuals are encouraged to complete a Personal Development Plan (PDP) as part of the appraisal process. Overall, needs are very much focused on service delivery with outcomes that relate to performance against team and organisational objectives.

Staff Report for year ended 31 March 2021

The cumulative sickness and absenteeism rate for the Social Care Council for 2020-21 was 3.4% which was below the Northern Ireland Social Care Council's corporate target to maintain absences at a maximum of 3.5%.

Staff Composition

The Social Care Council has 59 WTE staff plus 3 agency staff. 13% of staff work part-time or a form of compressed hours. The composition of the workforce is set out below –

Staff composition by pay band

Pay Band	% of Workforce
Band 3	26%
Band's 4/6	49%
Band's 7/8	20%
SLT	5%

Staff composition by gender:

Pay Band	Male	Female
Band 3	50%	50%
Band's 4/6	30%	70%
Band's 7/8	50%	50%
SLT	33.5%	66.5%
Overall Workforce	36%	64%

Staff composition by function:

Function	% of Workforce
Registration	26%
Workforce Development (includes PiP)	25%
Fitness to Practise	18%
Business Support	9.5%
Database	6.5%
Communications	5%
Committee	5%
SLT	5%

Employee Turnover

The overall employee turnover figure for 2020/21 was 5.26%. This total figure encompasses all employees who were leavers. All leavers were voluntary leavers due to either resignation or retirement.

Staff Report**Staff Numbers and Related Costs (Audited)**

Staff Costs	2021			2020
	Permanently employed staff £	Others £	Total £	Total £
Staff costs comprise:				
Wages and salaries	2,167,559	152,384	2,319,943	2,049,867
Social security costs	189,279	-	189,279	164,662
Other pension costs	385,710	-	385,710	334,723
Sub-Total	2,742,548	152,384	2,894,932	2,549,252
Capitalised staff costs	-	-	-	-
Total staff costs reported in Statement of Comprehensive Expenditure			2,894,932	2,549,252
Less recoveries in respect of outward secondments			-	-
Total net costs			2,894,932	2,549,252

The Social Care Council participates in the HSC Superannuation Scheme. Under this multi-employer defined benefit scheme both the NISCC and employees pay specified percentages of pay into the scheme and the liability to pay benefit falls to the DoH. The Social Care Council is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets and liabilities in the scheme on a consistent and reliable basis.

As per the requirements of IAS 19, full actuarial valuations by a professionally qualified actuary are required at intervals not exceeding four years. The actuary reviews the most recent actuarial valuation at the statement of financial position date and updates it to reflect current conditions. The 2016 valuation for the HSC Pension scheme updated to reflect current financial conditions (and a change in financial assumption methodology) will be used in 2020-21 financial statements.

The Working Time (Coronavirus) (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020 came into operation on 24 April 2020 and allows those workers who are unable to take annual leave as result of the pandemic to carry over up to four weeks' annual leave into the next two leave years. Any exemption will apply only to circumstances where workers are unable to take their leave as a result of the outbreak, and carryover of annual leave will be limited to the next two leave years. Requests to carry over leave under the regulations have been assessed departmental managers and accruals accounted for in the final expenditure.

Staff Report**Average number of persons employed (Audited)**

The average number of whole time equivalent persons employed during the year was as follows:

	2021		2020	
	Permanently employed staff No.	Others No.	Total No.	Total No.
Administrative and clerical	*43	3	46	**48
Social Services	13	-	13	11
Total average number of persons employed	56	3	59	59
Less average staff number relating to capitalised staff costs			-	-
Less average staff number in respect of outward secondments			-	-
Total net average number of persons employed			59	59

The staff numbers disclosed as Others in 2020-21 relate to temporary members of staff.

*FY20-21 staff numbers exclude 12 Non Executive members

**FY19-20 staff numbers exclude 13 Non Executive members

Staff Report**Reporting of early retirement and other compensation scheme – exit packages (Audited)**

Exit package cost band	Number of compulsory redundancies		Number of other departures agreed		Total number of packages by cost band	
	2021	2020	2021	2020	2021	2020
<£10,000	-	-	-	-	-	-
£10,000-£25,000	-	-	-	-	-	-
£25,000-£50,000	-	-	-	-	-	-
£50,000-£100,000	-	-	-	-	-	-
£100,000-£150,000	-	-	-	-	-	-
£150,000-£200,000	-	-	-	-	-	-
>£200,000	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total number of exit packages by type	-	-	-	-	-	-
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Total resource cost	-	-	-	-	-	-

Redundancy and other departure costs have been paid in accordance with the provisions of the HSC Pension Scheme Regulations and the Compensation for Premature Retirement Regulations, statutory provisions made under the Superannuation (Northern Ireland) Order 1972.

The table above shows the total exit cost of exit packages agreed and accounted for in 2020-21 and 2019-20. £nil exit costs were paid in 2020-21, the year of departure (2019-20 £nil). Where the NISCC has agreed early retirements, the additional costs are met by the NISCC and not by the HSC pension scheme. Ill health retirement costs are met by the pension scheme and are not included in the table.

Consultancy

The Social Care Council has not engaged any consultants over the period.

Off Payroll engagements

There were no off payroll engagements during the year 2020-21.

Patricia Higgins

Patricia Higgins,
Interim Chief Executive, Northern Ireland Social Care Council
Date: 14 July 2021

Section 3: Accountability and Audit Report

Accountability Report - Assembly Disclosure Notes

i. Losses and Special Payments - Losses Statement (Audited)

Losses statement	2020-2021		2019-2020
	Number of Cases	£000	£000
Total number of losses	-	-	-
Total value of losses	-	-	-

Individual losses over £250,000	2020-21		2019-20
	Number of Cases	£000	£000
Cash losses	-	-	-
Claims abandoned	-	-	-
Administrative write-offs	-	-	-
Fruitless payments	-	-	-
Stores losses	-	-	-

Special payments	2020-21		2019-20
	Number of Cases	£000	£000
Total number of special payments	-	-	-
Total value of special payments	-	-	-

Special Payments over £250,000	2020-21		2019-20
	Number of Cases	£000	£000
Compensation payments			
- Clinical Negligence	-	-	-
- Public Liability	-	-	-
- Employers Liability	-	-	-
- Other	-	-	-
Ex-gratia payments	-	-	-
Extra contractual	-	-	-
Special severance payments	-	-	-
Total special payments	-	-	-

Special Payments (Audited)

There were no other special payments or gifts made during the year.

Other Payments and Estimates (Audited)

There were no other payments made during the year.

Losses and Special Payments over £250,000 (Audited)

The Council had no losses or made no special payments over £250,000.

ii) Fees and Charges (Audited)

There were no other fees and charges during the year.

Assembly Disclosure Notes

iii) Remote Contingent Liabilities (Audited)

In addition to contingent liabilities reported within the meaning of IAS 37, the Social Care Council also reports liabilities for which the likelihood of a transfer of economic benefit in settlement is too remote to meet the definition of contingent liability. The Northern Ireland Social Care Council had no remote contingent liabilities.

iv) Charitable Donations (Audited)

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council did not make any charitable donations during the year and there were no personal data related incidents requiring disclosure.

v) Backdated Holiday Pay

The Court of Appeal (CoA) judgment from 17 June 2019 (PSNI v Agnew) determined that claims for Holiday Pay shortfall can be taken back to 1998. However, the PSNI has appealed the CoA judgment to the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court hearing was scheduled for the 23rd and 24th June 2021 but this has subsequently been adjourned. Based on the position in the NHS in England, Scotland and Wales, an accrual at 31 March 2021 has been calculated by HSC management for the liability and is included in these accounts. However, the extent to which the liability may exceed this amount remains uncertain as the calculation has not been agreed with Trade Unions. The potential additional financial effect of this is unquantifiable at present.

Regularity

In 2020-21 mechanisms were maintained in order to assure the Department of Health and the public of the effective performance of the Council in delivering its functions. The Accounting Officer provides assurance that all income and expenditure is in line with the principles of propriety and regularity as set out in Managing Public Money published by HM Treasury and that expenditure plans are in line with capital and revenue funding rules and regulations.

The Accounting Officer confirms that the annual report and accounts as a whole is fair balanced and understandable and that she takes personal responsibility for the annual report and accounts and the judgements required for determining that it is fair, balanced and understandable.



Patricia Higgins, Interim Chief Executive, Northern Ireland Social Care Council

Date: 14 July 2021

NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL

ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

FOREWORD

The accounts for the year ended 31 March 2021 have been prepared in a form determined by the Department of Health based on guidance from the Department of Finance Financial Reporting manual (FReM) and in accordance with the requirements of the Health and Social Care (Reform) Act (Northern Ireland) 2009.

NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL

ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

CERTIFICATE OF THE CHAIRMAN AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE

I certify that the annual accounts set out in the financial statements and notes to the accounts (pages 81-110) which I am required to prepare on behalf of the Northern Ireland Social Care Council have been compiled from and are in accordance with the accounts and financial records maintained by the Northern Ireland Social Care Council and with the accounting standards and policies for HSC bodies approved by the DoH.

Chief Executive 

Date: 14 July 2021

I certify that the annual accounts set out in the financial statements and notes to the accounts (pages 81-110) as prepared in accordance with the above requirements have been submitted to and duly approved by the Board.

Chairman 

Date: 14 July 2021

**NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

STATEMENT of COMPREHENSIVE NET EXPENDITURE for the year ended 31 March 2021

This account summarises the expenditure and income generated and consumed on an accruals basis. It also includes other comprehensive income and expenditure, which includes changes to the values of non-current assets and other financial instruments that cannot yet be recognised as income or expenditure.

		2021	2020
		£	£
	NOTE		
Revenue from contracts with customers	4.1	1,196,149	1,982,274
Other Income (Excluding interest)	4.2	-	-
Deferred income	4.3	-	-
Total operating income		1,196,149	1,982,274
Expenditure			
Staff costs	3	(2,894,932)	(2,549,252)
Purchase of goods and services	3	(10,567)	(40,428)
Depreciation, amortisation and impairment charges	3	(123,717)	(125,916)
Provision expense	3	-	-
Other expenditure	3	(2,186,955)	(2,280,612)
Total operating expenditure		(5,216,171)	(4,996,208)
Net Expenditure		(4,020,022)	(3,013,934)
Finance income		-	-
Finance expense	3	-	-
Net expenditure for the year		(4,020,022)	(3,013,934)
Revenue Resource Limit (RRL) received from DoH	23.1	4,031,193	3,022,710
Surplus against RRL		11,171	8,776
Items that will not be reclassified to net operating costs:			
Net gain/(loss) on revaluation of property, plant & equipment		-	-
Net (loss)/gain on revaluation of intangibles		(504)	860
Net gain/(loss) on revaluation of financial instruments		-	-
Items that may be reclassified to net operating costs:			
Net gain/(loss) on revaluation of investments		-	-
TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE EXPENDITURE for the year ended 31 March 2021		(4,020,526)	(3,013,074)

The notes on pages 81-110 form part of these accounts

**NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**


STATEMENT of FINANCIAL POSITION as at 31 March 2021

This statement presents the financial position of the Social Care Council. It comprises three main components: assets owned or controlled; liabilities owed to other bodies; and equity, the remaining value of the entity.

	NOTE	2021		2020	
		£	£	£	£
Non-Current Assets					
Property, plant and equipment	5.1/5.2	81,674		86,835	
Intangible assets	6.1/6.2	348,958		419,127	
Financial assets	7	-		-	
Trade and other receivables	13	-		-	
Other current assets	13	-		-	
Total Non-Current Assets			430,632		505,962
Current Assets					
Assets classified as held for sale	10	-		-	
Inventories	11	-		-	
Trade and other receivables	13	2,107		33,755	
Other current assets	13	67,869		47,158	
Intangible current assets	13	-		-	
Financial assets	7	-		-	
Cash and cash equivalents	12	92,558		270,011	
Total Current Assets			162,534		350,924
Total Assets			593,166		856,886
Current Liabilities					
Trade and other payables	14	(1,132,428)		(873,987)	
Other liabilities	14	-		-	
Intangible current liabilities	14	-		-	
Financial liabilities	7	-		-	
Provisions	15	-		-	
Total Current Liabilities			(1,132,428)		(873,987)
Total assets less current liabilities			(539,262)		(17,101)
Non-Current Liabilities					
Provisions	15	-		-	
Other payables > 1 yr	14	-		-	
Financial liabilities	7	-		-	
Total Non-Current Liabilities			-		-
Total assets less total liabilities			(539,262)		(17,101)
Taxpayers' Equity and other reserves					
Revaluation Reserve		36,071		36,575	
SoCNE Reserve		(575,333)		(53,676)	
Total equity			(539,262)		(17,101)

The financial statements on pages 77-80 were approved by the Board and were signed on its behalf by

Signed  (Chief Executive) Date: 14 July 2021

Signed  (Chairman) Date: 14 July 2021

**NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

STATEMENT of CASH FLOWS for the year ended 31 March 2021

The Statement of Cash Flows shows the changes in cash and cash equivalents of the Northern Ireland Social Care Council during the reporting period. The statement shows how the Northern Ireland Social Care Council generates and uses cash and cash equivalents by classifying cash flows as operating, investing and financing activities. The amount of net cash flows arising from operating activities is a key indicator of service costs and the extent to which these operations are funded by way of income from the recipients of services provided by the Northern Ireland Social Care Council. Investing activities represent the extent to which cash inflows and outflows have been made for resources which are intended to contribute to the Northern Ireland Social Care Council's future public service delivery.

	NOTE	2021 £	2020 £
Cash flows from operating activities			
		(4,020,022	
Net surplus after interest/Net operating expenditure)	(3,013,934)
Adjustments for non cash costs	3	141,225	141,816
(Increase)/decrease in trade and other receivables		10,937	272,555
<i>Less movements in receivables relating to items not passing through the NEA</i>			
Movements in receivables relating to the sale of property, plant & equipment		-	-
Movements in receivables relating to the sale of intangibles		-	-
Movements in receivables relating to finance leases		-	-
Movements in receivables relating to PFI and other service concession arrangement contracts		-	-
(Increase)/decrease in inventories		-	-
Increase/(decrease) in trade payables		258,441	54,253
<i>Less movements in payables relating to items not passing through the NEA</i>			
Movements in payables relating to the purchase of property, plant & equipment		(7,074)	(17,425)
Movements in payables relating to the purchase of intangibles		-	10,000
Movements in payables relating to finance leases		-	-
Movements on payables relating to PFI and other service concession arrangement contracts		-	-
Use of provisions	15	-	-
Net cash inflow/(outflow) from operating activities		(3,616,493)	(2,552,735)
Cash flows from investing activities			
(Purchase of property, plant & equipment)	5	(17,425)	(43,507)
(Purchase of intangible assets)	6	(25,000)	(106,849)
Proceeds of disposal of property, plant & equipment		-	-
Proceeds on disposal of intangibles		-	-
Proceeds on disposal of assets held for resale		-	-
Net cash outflow from investing activities		(42,425)	(150,356)
Cash flows from financing activities			
Grant in aid		3,481,465	2,898,999
Cap element of payments - finance leases and on balance sheet (SoFP) PFI and other service concession arrangements		-	-
Net financing		3,481,465	2,898,999
Net (decrease) increase in cash & cash equivalents in the period		(177,453)	195,908
Cash & cash equivalents at the beginning of the period	12	270,011	74,103
Cash & cash equivalents at the end of the period	12	92,558	270,011

NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021
STATEMENT of CHANGES in TAXPAYERS EQUITY for the year ended 31 March 2021

This statement shows the movement in the year on the different reserves held by Northern Ireland Social Care Council, analysed into 'Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure Reserve' (i.e. those reserves that reflect a contribution from the Department of Health). The Revaluation Reserve reflects the change in asset values that have not been recognised as income or expenditure. The SoCNE Reserve represents the total assets less liabilities of the Northern Ireland Social Care Council, to the extent that the total is not represented by other reserves and financing items.

	NOTE	SoCNE Reserve £	Revaluation Reserve £	Total £
Balance at 1 April 2019		45,359	35,715	81,074
Changes in Taxpayers Equity 2019-20				
Grant from DoH		2,898,999	-	2,898,999
Other reserves movements including transfers		-	-	-
Total comprehensive expenditure for the year		(3,013,934)	860	(3,013,074)
Transfer of asset ownership		-	-	-
Non cash charges – auditors’ remuneration	3	15,900	-	15,900
Balance at 31 March 2020		(53,676)	36,575	(17,101)
Changes in Taxpayers Equity 2020-21				
Grant from DoH		3,481,465	-	3,481,465
Other reserves movements including transfers		-	-	-
Total comprehensive expenditure for the year		(4,020,022)	(504)	(4,020,526)
Transfer of asset ownership		-	-	-
Non cash charges – auditors’ remuneration	3	16,900	-	16,900
Balance at 31 March 2021		(575,333)	36,071	(539,262)

NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTING POLICIES

1. Authority

These accounts have been prepared in a form determined by the Department of Health based on guidance from the Department of Finance's Financial Reporting manual (FReM) and in accordance with the requirements of Article 90(2) (a) of the Health and Personal Social Services (Northern Ireland) Order 1972 No 1265 (NI 14) as amended by Article 6 of the Audit and Accountability (Northern Ireland) Order 2003.

The accounting policies follow IFRS to the extent that it is meaningful and appropriate to the Northern Ireland Social Care Council. Where a choice of accounting policy is permitted, the accounting policy which has been judged to be most appropriate to the particular circumstances of the Northern Ireland Social Care Council for the purpose of giving a true and fair view has been selected. The Northern Ireland

Social Care Council's accounting policies have been applied consistently in dealing with items considered material in relation to the accounts, unless otherwise stated.

1.1 Accounting convention

These accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention modified to account for the revaluation of property, plant and equipment, intangible assets and inventories.

1.2 Currency

These accounts are presented in £ sterling and rounded in thousands.

1.3 Property, Plant and Equipment

Property, plant and equipment assets comprise Land, Buildings, Dwellings, Transport Equipment, Plant & Machinery, Information Technology, Furniture & Fittings, and Assets under construction.

Recognition

Property, plant and equipment *must* be capitalised if:

- it is held for use in delivering services or for administrative purposes;
- it is probable that future economic benefits will flow to, or service potential will be supplied to, the entity;
- it is expected to be used for more than one financial year;
- the cost of the item can be measured reliably; and
- the item has cost of at least £5,000; or
- Collectively, a number of items have a cost of at least £5,000 and individually have a cost of more than £1,000, where the assets are functionally interdependent, they had broadly simultaneous purchase dates, are anticipated to have simultaneous disposal dates and are under single managerial control; or
- Items form part of the initial equipping and setting-up cost of a new building, ward or unit, irrespective of their individual or collective cost.

NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTING POLICIES

On initial recognition property, plant and equipment are measured at cost including any expenditure such as installation, directly attributable to bringing them into working condition. Items classified as “under construction” are recognised in the Statement of Financial Position to the extent that money has been paid or a liability has been incurred.

Valuation of Land and Buildings

NISCC has no land and buildings

Modern Equivalent Asset

DoF has adopted a standard approach to depreciated replacement cost valuations based on modern equivalent assets and, where it would meet the location requirements of the service being provided, an alternative site can be valued. Land and Property Services (LPS) have included this requirement within the latest valuation.

Assets Under Construction (AUC)

Properties in the course of construction for service or administration purposes are carried at cost, less any impairment loss. Assets are revalued and depreciation commences when they are brought into use.

Short Life Assets

Short life assets are not indexed. Short life is defined as a useful life of up to and including 5 years. Short life assets are carried at depreciated historic cost as this is not considered to be materially different from fair value and are depreciated over their useful life.

Where estimated life of fixtures and equipment exceed 5 years, suitable indices will be applied each year and depreciation will be based on indexed amount.

NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Revaluation Reserve

An increase arising on revaluation is taken to the revaluation reserve except when it reverses an impairment for the same asset previously recognised in expenditure, in which case it is credited to expenditure to the extent of the decrease previously charged there. A revaluation decrease is recognised as an impairment charged to the revaluation reserve to the extent that there is a balance on the reserve for the asset and, thereafter, to expenditure.

1.4 Depreciation

No depreciation is provided on freehold land since land has unlimited or a very long established useful life. Items under construction are not depreciated until they are commissioned. Properties that are surplus to requirements and which meet the definition of “non-current assets held for sale” are also not depreciated.

Otherwise, depreciation is charged to write off the costs or valuation of property, plant and equipment and similarly, amortisation is applied to intangible non-current assets, less any residual value, over their estimated useful lives, in a manner that reflects the consumption of economic benefits or service potential of the assets. Assets held under finance leases are also depreciated over the lower of their estimated useful lives and the terms of the lease. The estimated useful life of an asset is the period over which the Northern Ireland Social Care Council expects to obtain economic benefits or service potential from the asset. Estimated useful lives and residual values are reviewed each year end, with the effect of any changes recognised on a prospective basis. The following asset lives have been used.

Asset Type	Asset Life
Freehold Buildings	25 – 60 years
Leasehold property	Remaining period of lease
IT Assets	3 – 10 years
Intangible assets	3 – 10 years
Other Equipment	3 – 15 years

1.5 Impairment loss

If there has been an impairment loss due to a general change in prices, the asset is written down to its recoverable amount, with the loss charged to the revaluation reserve to the extent that there is a balance on the reserve for the asset and, thereafter, to expenditure within the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure. If the impairment is due to the consumption of economic benefits the full amount of the impairment is charged to the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure and an amount up to the value of the impairment in the revaluation reserve is transferred to the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure Reserve. Where an impairment loss subsequently reverses, the carrying amount of the asset is increased to the revised estimate of the recoverable amount but capped at the amount that would have been determined had there been no initial impairment loss. The reversal of the impairment loss is credited firstly to the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure to the extent of the decrease previously charged there and thereafter to the revaluation reserve.

NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTING POLICIES

1.6 Subsequent expenditure

Where subsequent expenditure enhances an asset beyond its original specification, the directly attributable cost is capitalised. Where subsequent expenditure which meets the definition of capital restores the asset to its original specification, the expenditure is capitalised and any existing carrying value of the item replaced is written-out and charged to operating expenses.

The overall useful life of the Northern Ireland Social Care Council's buildings takes account of the fact that different components of those buildings have different useful lives. This ensures that depreciation is charged on those assets at the same rate as if separate components had been identified and depreciated at different rates.

1.7 Intangible assets

Intangible assets includes any of the following held - software, licences, trademarks, websites, development expenditure, Patents, Goodwill and intangible Assets under Construction. Software that is integral to the operating of hardware, for example an operating system is capitalised as part of the relevant item of property, plant and equipment. Software that is not integral to the operation of hardware, for example application software, is capitalised as an intangible asset. Expenditure on research is not capitalised: it is recognised as an operating expense in the period in which it is incurred. Internally-generated assets are recognised if, and only if, all of the following have been demonstrated:

- the technical feasibility of completing the intangible asset so that it will be available for use;
- the intention to complete the intangible asset and use it;
- the ability to sell or use the intangible asset;
- how the intangible asset will generate probable future economic benefits or service potential;
- the availability of adequate technical, financial and other resources to complete the intangible asset and sell or use it; and
- the ability to measure reliably the expenditure attributable to the intangible asset during its development.

Recognition

Intangible assets are non-monetary assets without physical substance, which are capable of sale separately from the rest of the Northern Ireland Social Care Council's business or which arise from contractual or other legal rights. Intangible assets are considered to have a finite life. They are recognised only when it is probable that future economic benefits will flow to, or service potential be provided to, the Northern Ireland Social Care Council; where the cost of the asset can be measured reliably. All single items over £5,000 in value must be capitalised while intangible assets which fall within the grouped asset definition must be capitalised if their individual value is at least £1,000 each and the group is at least £5,000 in value. The amount recognised for internally-generated intangible assets is the sum of the expenditure incurred from the date of commencement of the intangible asset, until it is complete and ready for use.

Intangible assets acquired separately are initially recognised at fair value.

Following initial recognition, intangible assets are carried at fair value by reference to an active market, and as no active market currently exists depreciated replacement cost has been used as fair value.

NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTING POLICIES

1.8 Non-current assets held for sale

Non-current assets are classified as held for sale if their carrying amount will be recovered principally through a sale transaction rather than through continuing use. In order to meet this definition IFRS 5 requires that the asset must be immediately available for sale in its current condition and that the sale is highly probable. A sale is regarded as highly probable where an active plan is in place to find a buyer for the asset and the sale is considered likely to be concluded within one year. Non-current assets held for sale are measured at the lower of their previous carrying amount and fair value, less any material directly attributable selling costs. Fair value is open market value, where one is available, including alternative uses.

Assets classified as held for sale are not depreciated.

The profit or loss arising on disposal of an asset is the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying amount. The profit from sale of land which is a non depreciating asset is recognised within income. The profit from sale of a depreciating asset is shown as a reduced expense. The loss from sale of land or from any depreciating assets is shown within operating expenses. On disposal, the balance for the asset on the revaluation reserve is transferred to the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure Reserve.

Property, plant or equipment that is to be scrapped or demolished does not qualify for recognition as held for sale. Instead, it is retained as an operational asset and its economic life is adjusted. The asset is de-recognised when it is scrapped or demolished.

1.9 Inventories

Inventories are valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value. This is considered to be a reasonable approximation to fair value due to the high turnover of stocks.

1.10 Income

Income is classified between Revenue from Contracts and Other Operating Income as assessed necessary in line with organisational activity, under the requirements of IFRS 15 and as applicable to the public sector. Judgement is exercised in order to determine whether the 5 essential criteria within the scope of IFRS 15 are met in order to define income as a contract. Income relates directly to the activities of the Northern Ireland Social Care Council and is recognised when, and to the extent that a performance obligation is satisfied in a manner that depicts the transfer to the customer of the goods or services promised. Where the criteria to determine whether a contract is in existence is not met, income is classified as Other Operating Income within the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure and is recognised when the right to receive payment is established.

In year of initial application, the introduction of IFRS 15 has not impacted on the timing of satisfying performance obligations of contracts in existence therefore the transaction price determined has not changed as a result of its introduction. The current impact of its introduction has resulted in reclassification of income based on consideration of whether there is a written, oral or implied contract in existence. Note 4 Income provides initial application disclosures in line with HM Treasury application guidance on transition to IFRS 15.

NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Grant in aid

Funding received from other entities, including the Department of Health and the Social Care Board are accounted for as grant in aid and are reflected through the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure Reserve.

1.11 Investments

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council does not have any investments.

1.12 Other expenses

Other operating expenses for goods or services are recognised when, and to the extent that, they have been received. They are measured at the fair value of the consideration payable.

1.13 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash is cash in hand and deposits with any financial institution repayable without penalty on notice of not more than 24 hours. Cash equivalents are investments that mature in 3 months or less from the date of acquisition and that are readily convertible to known amounts of cash with insignificant risk of change in value.

1.14 Leases

IFRS 16 Leases replaces IAS 17 Leases and is effective with EU adoption from 1 January 2020. In line with the requirements of the FReM, IFRS 16 will be implemented, as interpreted and adapted for the public sector, with effect from 1 April 2022.

Leases are classified as finance leases when substantially all the risks and rewards of ownership are transferred to the lessee. All other leases are classified as operating leases.

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council as lessee

Property, plant and equipment held under finance leases are initially recognised, at the inception of the lease, at fair value or, if lower, at the present value of the minimum lease payments, with a matching liability for the lease obligation to the lessor. Lease payments are apportioned between finance charges and reduction of the lease obligation so as to achieve a constant rate on interest on the remaining balance of the liability. Finance charges are recognised in calculating the Northern Ireland Social Care Council's surplus/deficit.

Operating lease payments are recognised as an expense on a straight-line basis over the lease term. Lease incentives are recognised initially as a liability and subsequently as a reduction of rentals on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

Contingent rentals are recognised as an expense in the period in which they are incurred.

Where a lease is for land and buildings, the land and building components are separated. Leased land may be either an operating lease or a finance lease depending on the conditions in the lease agreement and following the general guidance set out in IAS 17. Leased buildings are assessed as to whether they are operating or finance leases.

NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council as lessor

Amounts due from lessees under finance leases are recorded as receivables at the amount of the Northern Ireland Social Care Council's net investment in the leases. Finance lease income is allocated to accounting periods so as to reflect a constant periodic rate of return on the Northern Ireland Social Care Council's net investment outstanding in respect of the leases.

Rental income from operating leases is recognised on a straight-line basis over the term of the lease. Initial direct costs incurred in negotiating and arranging an operating lease are added to the carrying amount of the leased asset and recognised on a straight-line basis over the lease term.

1.15 Private Finance Initiative (PFI) transactions

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council has had no PFI transactions during the year.

1.16 Financial instruments

- Financial assets

Financial assets are recognised on the Statement of Financial Position when the Northern Ireland Social Care Council becomes party to the financial instrument contract or, in the case of trade receivables, when the goods or services have been delivered. Financial assets are derecognised when the contractual rights have expired or the asset has been transferred.

Financial assets are initially recognised at fair value. IFRS 9 introduces the requirement to consider the expected credit loss model on financial assets. The measurement of the loss allowance depends upon the Northern Ireland Social Care Council's assessment at the end of each reporting period as to whether the financial instrument's credit risk has increased significantly since initial recognition, based on reasonable and supportable information that is available, without undue cost or effort to obtain. The amount of expected credit loss recognised is measured on the basis of the probability weighted present value of anticipated cash shortfalls over the life of the instrument.

- Financial liabilities

Financial liabilities are recognised on the Statement of Financial Position when the Northern Ireland Social Care Council becomes party to the contractual provisions of the financial instrument or, in the case of trade payables, when the goods or services have been received. Financial liabilities are de-recognised when the liability has been discharged, that is, the liability has been paid or has expired.

Financial liabilities are initially recognised at fair value.

- Financial risk management

IFRS 7 requires disclosure of the role that financial instruments have had during the period in creating or changing the risks a body faces in undertaking its activities. Because of the relationships with HSC Commissioners, and the manner in which they are funded, financial instruments play a more limited role within the Northern Ireland Social Care Council in creating risk than would apply to a non public sector body of a similar size, therefore the Northern Ireland Social Care Council are not exposed to the degree of financial risk faced by business entities.

NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council have limited powers to borrow or invest surplus funds and financial assets and liabilities are generated by day to day operational activities rather than being held to change the risks facing the Northern Ireland Social Care Council in undertaking activities. Therefore the HSC is exposed to little credit, liquidity or market risk.

- **Currency risk**

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council is principally a domestic organisation with the great majority of transactions, assets and liabilities being in the UK and Sterling based. Northern Ireland Social Care Council has no overseas operations. The Northern Ireland Social Care Council therefore has low exposure to currency rate fluctuations.

- **Interest rate risk**

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council has limited powers to borrow or invest and therefore has low exposure to interest rate fluctuations.

- **Credit risk**

Because the majority of the Northern Ireland Social Care Council's income comes from contracts with other public sector bodies, the Northern Ireland Social Care Council has low exposure to credit risk.

- **Liquidity risk**

Since the Northern Ireland Social Care Council receives the majority of its funding through its principal Commissioner which is voted through the Assembly, it is therefore not exposed to significant liquidity risks.

1.17 Provisions

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council had no provisions at either 31 March 2021 or 31 March 2020.

1.18 Contingencies

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council had no contingent assets or liabilities at either 31 March 2021 or 31 March 2020.

1.19 Employee benefits

Short-term employee benefits

Under the requirements of IAS 19: Employee Benefits, staff costs must be recorded as an expense as soon as the organisation is obligated to pay them. This includes the cost of any untaken leave that has been earned at the year end. This cost has been determined using individual's salary costs applied to their unused leave balances determined from a report of the unused annual leave balance as at 31 March 2021. It is not anticipated that the level of untaken leave will vary significantly from year to year. However during the 2020-21 financial year the unused annual leave balances and therefore the cost of unused leave accounted for increased materially due to COVID-19 pressures resulting in staff being unable to take planned leave. To ensure staff didn't lose annual leave during the 2020-21 year, key workers were granted permission to carry over additional unused leave above the usual 5 days, to be taken within the next 2 financial years. The Northern Ireland Social Care Council's staff have key worker status and thus were able to avail of this. [Untaken flexi leave is estimated to be immaterial to the Northern Ireland Social Care Council and has not been included].

NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Retirement benefit costs

Past and present employees are covered by the provisions of the HSC Superannuation Scheme. The Northern Ireland Social Care Council participates in the HSC Superannuation Scheme. Under this multi-employer defined benefit scheme both the Northern Ireland Social Care Council and employees pay specified percentages of pay into the scheme and the liability to pay benefit falls to the DoH. The Northern Ireland Social Care Council is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets and liabilities in the scheme on a consistent and reliable basis.

The costs of early retirements are met by the Northern Ireland Social Care Council and charged to the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure at the time the Northern Ireland Social Care Council commits itself to the retirement.

As per the requirements of IAS 19, full actuarial valuations by a professionally qualified actuary are required at intervals not exceeding four years. The actuary reviews the most recent actuarial valuation at the statement of financial position date and updates it to reflect current conditions. The 2016 valuation for the HSC Pension scheme updated to reflect current financial conditions (and a change in financial assumption methodology) will be used in 2020-21 accounts.

1.20 Reserves

Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure Reserve

Accumulated surpluses are accounted for in the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure Reserve.

Revaluation Reserve

The Revaluation Reserve reflects the unrealised balance of cumulative indexation and revaluation adjustments to assets other than donated assets.

1.21 Value Added Tax

Where output VAT is charged or input VAT is recoverable, the amounts are stated net of VAT. Irrecoverable VAT is charged to the relevant expenditure category or included in the capitalised purchase cost of fixed assets.

1.22 Third party assets

Assets belonging to third parties (such as money held on behalf of patients) are not recognised in the accounts since the Northern Ireland Social Care Council has no beneficial interest in them. Details of third party assets are given in Note 23 to the accounts.

NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTING POLICIES

1.23 Government Grants

The note to the financial statements distinguishes between grants from UK government entities and grants from European Union

1.24 Losses and Special Payments

Losses and special payments are items that the Assembly would not have contemplated when it agreed funds for the health service or passed legislation. By their nature they are items that ideally should not arise. They are therefore subject to special control procedures compared with the generality of payments. They are divided into different categories, which govern the way that individual cases are handled.

Losses and special payments are charged to the relevant functional headings in expenditure on an accruals basis, including losses which would have been made good through insurance cover had HSC bodies not been bearing their own risks (with insurance premiums then being included as normal revenue expenditure). However, the note on losses and special payments is compiled directly from the losses and compensations register which reports amounts on an accruals basis with the exception of provisions for future losses.

1.25 Accounting Standards that have been issued but have not yet been adopted

Under IAS 8 there is a requirement to disclose those standards issued but not yet adopted.

IFRS 16 Leases replaces IAS 17 Leases and is effective with EU adoption from 1 January 2019. In line with the requirements of the FReM, IFRS 16 will be implemented, as interpreted and adapted for the public sector, with effect from 1 April 2021.

'The IASB issued new and amended standards (IFRS 10, IFRS 11 & IFRS 12) that affect the consolidation and reporting of subsidiaries, associates and joint ventures. These standards were effective with EU adoption from 1 January 2014.

Accounting boundary IFRS' are currently adapted in the FReM so that the Westminster departmental accounting boundary is based on ONS control criteria, as designated by Treasury. A similar review in NI, which will bring NI departments under the same adaptation, has been carried out and the resulting recommendations were agreed by the Executive in December 2019. With effect from 2020-21, the accounting boundary for departments will change and there will also be an impact on departments around the disclosure requirements under IFRS 12. ALBs apply IFRS in full and their consolidation boundary may change as a result of the new Standards.'

Management consider that any other new accounting policies issued but not yet adopted are unlikely to have a significant impact on the accounts in the period of the initial application.

1.26 Going Concern

In addition, due to the manner in which the Northern Ireland Social Care Council is funded, the statement of financial position will show a negative position. In line with FReM, sponsored entities such as the Social Care Council would show total net liabilities, should prepare financial statements on a going concern basis. The cash required to discharge these net liabilities will be requested from the Department when they fall due and is shown in the Statement of Changes in Taxpayers' Equity.

**NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

NOTE 2 ANALYSIS OF NET EXPENDITURE BY SEGMENT

The core business and strategic direction of the Northern Ireland Social Care Council is to protect the public through the registration and regulation of the social care workforce and to regulate the training for social workers.

The Board of the Northern Ireland Social Care Council acts as the Chief Operating Decision Maker and receives financial information on the Northern Ireland Social Care Council as a whole and makes decisions on this basis. Hence, it is appropriate that the Northern Ireland Social Care Council reports on a single operational segment basis.

**NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

NOTE 3 EXPENDITURE

	2021	2020
	£	£
Operating expenses are as follows:-		
Staff costs: ⁵		
Wages and Salaries	2,319,943	2,049,867
Social security costs	189,279	164,662
Other pension costs	385,710	334,723
Revenue grants to voluntary organisations	452,559	599,314
Supplies and services – general	10,567	40,428
Establishment	525,543	725,704
Transport	-	-
Premises	540,285	385,371
Rentals under operating leases	315,059	261,780
Miscellaneous	114,782	75,853
BSO Services	221,219	216,690
Total Operating Expenses	5,074,946	4,854,392
Non cash items		
Depreciation	29,052	24,613
Amortisation	94,665	101,303
Impairments	-	-
(Profit) on disposal of property, plant & equipment (including land)	-	-
(Profit) on disposal of intangibles	-	-
Loss on disposal of property, plant & equipment (including land)	608	-
Loss on disposal of intangibles	-	-
Increase / Decrease in provisions (provision provided for in year less any release)	-	-
Cost of borrowing provisions (unwinding of discount on provisions)	-	-
Auditors' remuneration	16,900	15,900
Total non cash items	141,225	141,816
Total	5,216,171	4,996,208

During the year the Northern Ireland Social Care Council purchased £1,250 non audit services from its external auditor (NIAO) (2019-20: £Nil)

⁵ Further detailed analysis of staff costs is located in the Staff Report on page 69 within the Accountability Report.

**NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

NOTE 4 INCOME

NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL

4.1 Revenue from Contracts with Customers

	2021	2020
	£	£
Other income from non-patient services	1,196,149	1,982,274
Seconded staff	-	-
Charitable and other contributions to expenditure	-	-
Donations / Government Grant / Lottery Funding for non-current assets	-	-
Profit on disposal of land	-	-
Interest receivable	-	-
Total Revenue from Contracts with Customers	<u>1,196,149</u>	<u>1,982,274</u>

4.2 Other Operating Income

	2021	2020
	£	£
Other income from non-patient services	-	-
Total Other Operating Income	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Total Income	<u>1,196,149</u>	<u>1,982,274</u>

4.3 Deferred Income

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council had no income released from conditional grants in 2020-21 and 2019-20.

NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

NOTE 5.1 Property, plant & equipment - year ended 31 March 2021

	Land £	Buildings (excluding dwellings) £	Dwellings £	Assets under Construction £	Plant and Machinery (Equipment) £	Transport Equipment £	Information Technology (IT) £	Furniture and Fittings £	Total £
Cost or Valuation									
At 1 April 2020	-	-	-	-	6,410	-	213,882	-	220,292
Indexation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Additions	-	-	-	-	-	-	24,499	-	24,499
Donations / Government grant / Lottery Funding	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Reclassifications	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Transfers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Revaluation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Impairment charged to the SoCNE	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Impairment charged to revaluation reserve	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Reversal of impairments (indexn)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Disposals	-	-	-	-	-	-	(5,632)	-	(5,632)
At 31 March 2021	-	-	-	-	6,410	-	232,749	-	239,159

Accumulated Depreciation

At 1 April 2020	-	-	-	-	6,410	-	127,047	-	133,457
Indexation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Reclassifications	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Transfers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Revaluation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Impairment charged to the SoCNE	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Impairment charged to the revaluation reserve	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Reversal of impairments (indexn)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Disposals	-	-	-	-	-	-	(5,024)	-	(5,024)
Provided during the year	-	-	-	-	-	-	29,052	-	29,052
At 31 March 2021	-	-	-	-	6,410	-	151,075	-	157,485

Any fall in value through negative indexation or revaluation is shown as impairment.

NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

NOTE 5.1 (continued) Property, plant & equipment- year ended 31 March 2021

	Land £	Buildings (excluding dwellings) £	Dwellings £	Assets under Construction £	Plant and Machinery (Equipment) £	Transport Equipment £	Information Technology (IT) £	Furniture and Fittings £	Total £
Carrying Amount									
At 31 March 2021	-	-	-	-	-	-	81,674	-	81,674
At 31 March 2020	-	-	-	-	-	-	86,835	-	86,835

Asset financing

Owned	-	-	-	-	-	-	81,674	-	81,674
Finance leased	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
On SOFP PFI and other service concession arrangements contracts	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Carrying Amount									
At 31 March 2021	-	-	-	-	-	-	81,674	-	81,674

The total amount of depreciation charged in the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure Account in respect of assets held under finance leases and hire purchase contracts is £Nil (2020: £Nil).

The fair value of assets funded from the following sources during the year was:

	2021	2020
	£	£
Donations	-	-
Government Grant	-	-
Lottery Funding	-	-

NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

NOTE 5.2 Property, plant & equipment - year ended 31 March 2020

	Land £	Buildings (excluding dwellings) £	Dwellings £	Assets under Construction £	Plant and Machinery (Equipment) £	Transport Equipment £	Information Technology (IT) £	Furniture and Fittings £	Total £
Cost or Valuation									
At 1 April 2019	-	-	-	-	6,410	-	151,181	-	157,591
Indexation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Additions	-	-	-	-	-	-	60,932	-	60,932
Donations / Government grant / Lottery Funding	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Reclassifications	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Transfers	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,769	-	1,769
Revaluation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Impairment charged to the SoCNE	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Impairment charged to revaluation reserve	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Reversal of impairments (indexn)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Disposals	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
At 31 March 2020	-	-	-	-	6,410	-	213,882	-	220,292

Depreciation

At 1 April 2019	-	-	-	-	6,410	-	102,434*	-	108,844
Indexation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Reclassifications	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Transfers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Revaluation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Impairment charged to the SoCNE	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Impairment charged to the revaluation reserve	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Reversal of impairments (indexn)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Disposals	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Provided during the year	-	-	-	-	-	-	24,613	-	24,613
At 31 March 2020	-	-	-	-	6,410	-	127,047	-	133,457

*small rounding balance b/f from prior year's note 5.1

NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

NOTE 5.2 (continued) Property, Plant & Equipment- year ended 31 March 2020

	Land £	Buildings (excluding dwellings) £	Dwellings £	Assets under Construction £	Plant and Machinery (Equipment) £	Transport Equipment £	Information Technology (IT) £	Furniture and Fittings £	Total £
Carrying Amount									
At 31 March 2020	-	-	-	-	-	-	86,835	-	86,835
At 31 March 2019	-	-	-	-	-	-	48,747	-	48,747

Asset financing

Owned	-	-	-	-	-	-	86,835	-	86,835
Finance leased	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
On SOFP PFI and other service concession arrangements contracts	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Carrying Amount									
At 31 March 2020	-	-	-	-	-	-	86,835	-	86,835

Asset financing

Owned	-	-	-	-	-	-	48,747	-	48,747
Finance leased	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
On SOFP PFI and other service concession arrangements contracts	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Carrying Amount									
At 31 March 2019	-	-	-	-	-	-	48,747	-	48,747

NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

NOTE 6.1 Intangible assets- year ended 31 March 2021

	Software Licenses £	Information Technology £	Websites £	Development Expenditure £	Licences, Trademarks & Artistic Originals £	Patents £	Goodwill £	Payments on Account & Assets under Construction £	Total £
Cost or Valuation									
At 1 April 2020	60,021	1,096,534	-	-	-	-	-	1	1,156,556
Indexation	(77)	(1,693)	-	-	-	-	-	-	(1,770)
Additions	-	25,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	25,000
Donations / Government grant / Lottery Funding	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Reclassifications	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Transfers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Revaluation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Impairment charged to the SoCNE	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Impairment charged to revaluation reserve	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Disposals	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
At 31 March 2021	59,944	1,119,841	-	-	-	-	-	1	1,179,786

Accumulated Amortisation

At 1 April 2020	52,323	685,106	-	-	-	-	-	-	737,429
Indexation	(77)	(1,189)	-	-	-	-	-	-	(1,266)
Reclassifications	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Transfers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Revaluation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Impairment charged to the SoCNE	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Impairment charged to the revaluation reserve	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Disposals	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Provided during the year	2,640	92,025	-	-	-	-	-	-	94,665
At 31 March 2021	54,886	775,942	-	-	-	-	-	-	830,828

NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

NOTE 6.1 (continued) Intangible assets - year ended 31 March 2021

	Software Licenses £	Information Technology £	Websites £	Development Expenditure £	Licences, Trademarks & Artistic Originals £	Patents £	Goodwill £	Payments on Account & Assets under Construction £	Total £
Carrying Amount At 31 March 2021	5,058	343,899	-	-	-	-	-	1	348,958
At 31 March 2020	7,698	411,428	-	-	-	-	-	1	419,127

Asset financing

Owned	5,058	343,899	-	-	-	-	-	1	348,958
Finance leased	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
On B/S (SoFP) PFI and other service concession arrangements contracts	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Carrying Amount At 31 March 2021	5,058	343,899	-	-	-	-	-	1	348,958

Any fall in value through negative indexation or revaluation is shown as impairment.

The fair value of assets funded from the following sources during the year was:

	2021 £	2020 £
Donations	-	-
Government Grant	-	-
Lottery Funding	-	-

NOTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

NOTE 6.2 Intangible assets - year ended 31 March 2020

	Software Licenses £	Information Technology £	Websites £	Development Expenditure £	Licences, Trademarks & Artistic Originals £	Patents £	Goodwill £	Payments on Account & Assets under Construction £	Total £
Cost or Valuation									
At 1 April 2019	51,976	998,841	-	-	-	-	-	7,955	1,058,772
Indexation	125	2,578	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,703
Additions	7,920	6,108	-	-	-	-	-	82,821	96,849
Donations / Government grant / Lottery Funding	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Reclassifications	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Transfers	-	89,007	-	-	-	-	-	(90,775)	(1,768)
Revaluation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Impairment charged to the SoCNE	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Impairment charged to revaluation reserve	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Disposals	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
At 31 March 2020	60,021	1,096,534	-	-	-	-	-	1	1,156,556

Amortisation

At 1 April 2019	51,221	583,062	-	-	-	-	-	-	634,283
Indexation	125	1,718	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,843
Reclassifications	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Transfers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Revaluation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Impairment charged to the SoCNE	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Impairment charged to the revaluation reserve	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Disposals	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Provided during the year	977	100,326	-	-	-	-	-	-	101,303
At 31 March 2020	52,323	685,106	-	-	-	-	-	-	737,429

NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

NOTE 6.2 Intangible assets - year ended 31 March 2020

	Software Licenses £	Information Technology £	Websites £	Development Expenditure £	Licences, Trademarks & Artistic Originals £	Patents £	Goodwill £	Payments on Account & Assets under Construction £	Total £
Carrying Amount At 31 March 2020	7,698	411,428	-	-	-	-	-	1	419,127
At 31 March 2019	755	415,779	-	-	-	-	-	7,955	424,489

Asset financing

Owned	7,698	411,428	-	-	-	-	-	1	419,127
Finance leased	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
On B/S (SoFP) PFI and other service concession arrangements contracts	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Carrying Amount At 31 March 2020	7,698	411,428	-	-	-	-	-	1	419,127

Asset financing

Owned	755	415,779	-	-	-	-	-	7,955	424,489
Finance leased	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
On B/S (SoFP) PFI and other service concession arrangements contracts	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Carrying Amount At 31 March 2019	755	415,779	-	-	-	-	-	7,955	424,489

NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

NOTE 7 FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

As the cash requirements of the Northern Ireland Social Care Council are met through Grant-in-Aid provided by the Department of Health, financial instruments play a more limited role in creating and managing risk than would apply to a non-public sector body.

The majority of financial instruments relate to contracts to buy non-financial items in line with the Northern Ireland Social Care Council's expected purchase and usage requirements and the Northern Ireland Social Care Council is therefore exposed to little credit, liquidity or market risk.

NOTE 8 INVESTMENTS AND LOANS

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council had no investments or loans at either 31 March 2021 or 31 March 2020

NOTE 9 IMPAIRMENTS

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council had no impairments at either 31 March 2021 or 31 March 2020.

NOTE 10 ASSETS CLASSIFIED AS HELD FOR SALE

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council did not hold any assets classified as held for sale at either 31 March 2021 or 31 March 2020.

NOTE 11 INVENTORIES

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council did not hold any goods for resale at either 31 March 2021 or 31 March 2020.

NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

NOTE 12 CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

	2021	2020
	£	£
Balance at 1 st April	270,011	74,103
Net change in cash and cash equivalents	(177,453)	195,908
Balance at 31st March	92,558	270,011

The following balances at 31 March were held at	2021	2020
	£	£
Commercial Banks and cash in hand	92,558	270,011
Balance at 31st March	92,558	270,011

The bank account is operated by Business Services Organisation (BSO) on behalf of the Northern Ireland Social Care Council. The account is in the legal name of the BSO.

NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

NOTE 13 TRADE RECEIVABLES, FINANCIAL AND OTHER ASSETS

	2021	2020
	£	£
Amounts falling due within one year		
Trade receivables	2,107	33,755
Deposits and advances	-	-
VAT receivable	-	-
Other receivables – not relating to fixed assets	-	-
Other receivables – relating to property, plant and equipment	-	-
Other receivables – relating to intangibles	-	-
Trade and other receivables	<u>2,107</u>	<u>33,755</u>
Prepayments	67,869	47,158
Accrued income	-	-
Current part of PFI and other service concession arrangements prepayment	-	-
Other current assets	<u>67,869</u>	<u>47,158</u>
Carbon reduction commitment	-	-
Intangible current assets	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Amounts falling due after more than one year		
Trade receivables	-	-
Deposits and advances	-	-
Other receivables	-	-
Trade and other receivables	-	-
Prepayments and accrued income	-	-
Other current assets falling due after more than one year	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
TOTAL TRADE AND OTHER RECEIVABLES	<u><u>2,107</u></u>	<u><u>33,755</u></u>
TOTAL OTHER CURRENT ASSETS	<u><u>67,869</u></u>	<u><u>47,158</u></u>
TOTAL INTANGIBLE CURRENT ASSETS	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>
TOTAL RECEIVABLES AND OTHER CURRENT ASSETS	<u><u>69,976</u></u>	<u><u>80,913</u></u>

The balances are net of a provision for bad debts of £Nil (2019-20: £Nil)

NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

NOTE 14 TRADE PAYABLES AND OTHER CURRENT LIABILITIES

	2021 £	2020 £
Amounts falling due within one year		
Other taxation and social security	-	-
Bank overdraft	-	-
VAT payable	-	-
Trade capital payables – property, plant and equipment	-	-
Trade capital payables – intangibles	-	-
Trade revenue payables	224,556	34,830
Payroll payables	87,370	116,665
Clinical Negligence payables	-	-
RPA payables	-	-
BSO payables	756	212
Other payables	9,575	91,555
Accruals	779,647	596,140
Accruals– relating to property, plant and equipment	24,499	17,425
Accruals – relating to intangibles	-	-
Deferred income	6,025	17,160
Trade and other payables	1,132,428	873,987
	-	-
Current part of finance leases	-	-
Current part of long term loans	-	-
Current part of imputed finance lease element of PFI and other service concession arrangements	-	-
Other current liabilities	-	-
	-	-
Carbon reduction commitment	-	-
Intangible current liabilities	-	-
	-	-
Total payables falling due within one year	1,132,428	873,987
Amounts falling due after more than one year		
Other payables, accruals and deferred income	-	-
Trade and other payables	-	-
Clinical Negligence payables	-	-
Finance leases	-	-
Current part of imputed finance lease element of PFI and other service concession arrangements	-	-
Long term loans	-	-
Total non-current other payables	-	-
	-	-
TOTAL TRADE PAYABLES AND OTHER CURRENT LIABILITIES	1,132,428	873,987

NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

NOTE 15 PROVISIONS

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council had no provisions for liabilities and charges at either 31 March 2021 or 31 March 2020.

NOTE 16 CAPITAL COMMITMENTS

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council had no capital commitments at either 31 March 2021 or 31 March 2020.

NOTE 17 COMMITMENTS UNDER LEASES

17.1 Operating Leases

Total future minimum lease payments under operating leases are given in the table below for each of the following periods

	2021	2020
	£	£
Obligations under operating leases comprise		
Land		
Not later than 1 year	-	-
Later than 1 year and not later than 5 years	-	-
Later than 5 years	-	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	-	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Buildings		
Not later than one year	315,120	314,400
Later than one year but not later than five years	131,300	445,398
Later than five years	-	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	446,420	759,798
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Other		
Not later than 1 year	-	-
Later than 1 year and not later than 5 years	-	-
Later than 5 years	-	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	-	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>

17.2 Finance Leases

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council had no finance leases at either 31 March 2021 or 31 March 2020.

17.3 Operating Leases

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council did not issue any operating leases at either 31 March 2021 or 31 March 2020.

NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

NOTE 18 COMMITMENTS UNDER PFI AND OTHER SERVICE CONCESSION ARRANGEMENT CONTRACTS

18.1 Off balance sheet PFI and other service concession arrangement schemes

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council had no commitments under PFI and other concession arrangement contracts at 31 March 2021 or 31 March 2020.

NOTE 19 OTHER FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council did not have any other financial commitments at 31 March 2021 or 31 March 2020.

NOTE 20 CONTINGENT LIABILITIES

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council did not have any quantifiable contingent liabilities at 31 March 2020.

The impact of the cyber security incident at Queen's University Belfast (QUB) in February 2021 on the HSC (as referenced in the Governance Statement) is currently under investigation. There may be a financial risk in relation to possible future liability, for potential claims for loss of personal data. As the breach occurred in a third party's systems the potential for liability is unclear and any financial impact is unquantifiable at present.

20.1 Financial guarantees, indemnities and letters of comfort

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council did not have any financial guarantees, indemnities and letters of comfort at 31 March 2021 or 31 March 2020.

NOTE 21 RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council is an arm's length body of the Department of Health and as such the Department is a related party with which the Northern Ireland Social Care Council has had various material transactions during the year.

In addition there were material transactions throughout the year with the Business Services Organisation who are a related party by virtue of being an arms length body with the Department of Health.

During the year, none of the Board members, members of the key management staff or other related parties has undertaken any material transactions with the Northern Ireland Social Care Council.

NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

NOTE 22 THIRD PARTY ASSETS

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council held no assets at either 31 March 2021 or 31 March 2020 belonging to third parties.

NOTE 23 FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE TARGETS

23.1 Revenue Resource Limit

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council is given a Revenue Resource Limit which it is not permitted to overspend.

The Revenue Resource Limit for Northern Ireland Social Care Council is calculated as follows:

	2021	2020
	Total	Total
	£	£
DoH (excludes non cash)	3,889,968	2,880,894
Other Government Department (HSCB)	-	-
Non cash RRL (from DHSSPS)	141,225	141,816
Total agreed RRL	4,031,193	3,022,710
Adjustment for income received re Donations / Government grant / Lottery funding for non-current assets	-	-
Total Revenue Resource Limit to Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure	4,031,193	3,022,710

23.2 Capital Resource Limit

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council is given a Capital Resource Limit which it is not permitted to overspend.

	2021	2020
	£	£
Gross capital expenditure by the Social Care Council (Receipts from sales of fixed assets)	49,499	157,781
Net capital expenditure	49,499	157,781
Capital Resource Limit	49,500	159,388
Underspend against CRL	(1)	(1607)

NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

NOTE 23 FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE TARGETS

23.3 Financial Performance Targets

The Northern Ireland Social Care Council is required to ensure that it breaks even on an annual basis by containing its surplus to within 0.25% of RRL or £20,000, whichever is greater.

	2021	2020
	£	£
	(4,020,022)	(3,013,934)
	4,031,193	3,022,710
	11,171	8,776
Break Even cumulative position (opening)	149,893	141,207
Break Even cumulative position (closing)	161,154	149,983

Materiality Test:

	2021	2020
	%	%
Break Even in year position as % of RRL	0.28%	0.29%
Break Even cumulative position as % of RRL	4.00%	4.96%

NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

NOTE 24 EVENTS AFTER THE REPORTING PERIOD

There are no post balance sheet events having a material effect on the accounts

Date of authorisation for issue

The Accounting Officer authorised these financial statements for issue on 18 August 2021.

NORTHERN IRELAND SOCIAL CARE COUNCIL

THE CERTIFICATE AND REPORT OF THE COMPTROLLER AND AUDITOR GENERAL TO THE NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY

Opinion on financial statements

I certify that I have audited the financial statements of the Northern Ireland Social Care Council for the year ended 31 March 2021 under the Health and Personal Social Services Act (Northern Ireland) 2001. The financial statements comprise: the Statements of Comprehensive Net Expenditure, Financial Position, Cash Flows, Changes in Taxpayers' Equity; and the related notes including significant accounting policies. These financial statements have been prepared under the accounting policies set out within them.

The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and International Financial Reporting Standards as adopted by the European Union and interpreted by the Government Financial Reporting Manual.

I have also audited the information in the Accountability Report that is described in that report as having been audited.

In my opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the Northern Ireland Social Care Council's affairs as at 31 March 2021 and of the Northern Ireland Social Care Council's net expenditure for the year then ended; and
- have been properly prepared in accordance with the Health and Personal Social Services Act (Northern Ireland) 2001 and Department of Health directions issued thereunder.

Opinion on regularity

In my opinion, in all material respects the expenditure and income recorded in the financial statements have been applied to the purposes intended by the Assembly and the financial transactions recorded in the financial statements conform to the authorities which govern them.

Basis for opinions

I conducted my audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (ISAs) (UK), applicable law and Practice Note 10 'Audit of Financial Statements of Public Sector Entities in the United Kingdom'. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of this certificate. My staff and I are independent of Northern Ireland Social Care Council in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Financial Reporting Council's Revised Ethical Standard 2019, and have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. I believe that the audit evidence obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinions.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, I have concluded that Northern Ireland Social Care Council's use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work I have performed, I have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the Northern Ireland Social Care Council's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

The going concern basis of accounting for Northern Ireland Social Care Council is adopted in consideration of the requirements set out in the Government Reporting Manual, which require entities to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements where it anticipated that the services which they provide will continue into the future.

My responsibilities and the responsibilities of the Council and the Accounting Officer with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other Information

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements, the parts of the Accountability Report described in that report as having been audited, and my audit certificate and report. The Council and the Accounting Officer are responsible for the other information included in the annual report. My opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in my report, I do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

My responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or my knowledge obtained in the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If I identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, I am required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work I have performed, I conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, I am required to report that fact.

I have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinion on other matters

In my opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the parts of the Accountability Report to be audited have been properly prepared in accordance with Department of Health directions made under the Health and Personal Social Services Act (Northern Ireland) 2001; and
- the information given in the Performance Report and Accountability Report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements.

Matters on which I report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the Northern Ireland Social Care Council and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, I have not identified material misstatements in the Performance Report and Accountability Report. I have nothing to report in respect of the following matters which I report to you if, in my opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept; or
- the financial statements and the parts of the Accountability Report to be audited are not in agreement with the accounting records; or
- certain disclosures of remuneration specified by the Government Financial Reporting Manual are not made; or
- I have not received all of the information and explanations I require for my audit; or
- the Governance Statement does not reflect compliance with the Department of Finance's guidance.

Responsibilities of the Council and Accounting Officer for the financial statements

As explained more fully in the Statement of Accounting Officer Responsibilities, the Council and the Accounting Officer are responsible for

- the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the applicable financial reporting framework and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view;
- such internal controls as the Accounting Officer determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error;
- assessing the Northern Ireland Social Care Council's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Accounting Officer anticipates that the services provided by Northern Ireland Social Care Council will not continue to be provided in the future.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

My responsibility is to audit, certify and report on the financial statements in accordance with the Health and Personal Social Services Act (Northern Ireland) 2001.

My objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error and to issue a certificate that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

I design procedures in line with my responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of non-compliance with laws and regulation, including fraud.

My procedures included:

- obtaining an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework applicable to the Northern Ireland Social Care Council through discussion with management and application of extensive public sector accountability knowledge. The key laws and regulations I considered included the Health and Personal Social Services Act (Northern Ireland) 2001 and the Department of Health directions issued thereunder;
- making enquires of management and those charged with governance on Northern Ireland Social Care Council 's compliance with laws and regulations;
- making enquiries of internal audit, management and those charged with governance as to susceptibility to irregularity and fraud, their assessment of the risk of material misstatement due to fraud and irregularity, and their knowledge of actual, suspected and alleged fraud and irregularity;
- completing risk assessment procedures to assess the susceptibility of Northern Ireland Social Care Council 's financial statements to material misstatement, including how fraud might occur. This included, but was not limited to, an engagement director led engagement team discussion on fraud to identify particular areas, transaction streams and business practices that may be susceptible to material misstatement due to fraud.; As part of this discussion, I identified potential for fraud in the following areas: revenue recognition, regularity of expenditure and the posting of unusual journals;
- engagement director oversight to ensure the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with the applicable legal and regulatory framework throughout the audit;
- documenting and evaluating the design and implementation of internal controls in place to mitigate risk of material misstatement due to fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations;
- designing audit procedures to address specific laws and regulations which the engagement team considered to have a direct material effect on the financial statements in terms of misstatement and irregularity, including fraud. These audit procedures included, but were not limited to, reading board and committee minutes, and agreeing financial statement disclosures to underlying supporting documentation and approvals as appropriate;
- addressing the risk of fraud as a result of management override of controls by:
 - performing analytical procedures to identify unusual or unexpected relationships or movements;
 - testing journal entries to identify potential anomalies, and inappropriate or unauthorised adjustments;
 - assessing whether judgements and other assumptions made in determining accounting estimates were indicative of potential bias; and
 - investigating significant or unusual transactions made outside of the normal course of business.

A further description of my responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of my certificate.

In addition, I am required to obtain evidence sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the expenditure and income recorded in the financial statements have been applied to the purposes intended by the Assembly and the financial transactions recorded in the financial statements conform to the authorities which govern them.

Report

I have no observations to make on these financial statements.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kieran J. Donnelly". The signature is written in a cursive style with a clear, legible font.

KJ Donnelly
Comptroller and Auditor General
Northern Ireland Audit Office
1 Bradford Court
Galwally
BELFAST
BT8 6RB

18 August 2021

Northern Ireland Social Care Council Board Membership – 2020-21



Chair, Paul Martin



Neil Bodger



Noelle Barton



Sarah Browne



Roslyn Dougherty



Gerard Guckian



David Hayes



Christine Hunter



Brenda Maitland



Jacqueline McGarvey



Catherine McPhillips



Anne O'Reilly



Lee Wilson

Northern Ireland Social Care Council Organisational Chart at 31 March 2021



Organisation Structure at 31 March 2021



Northern Ireland Social Care Council Risk Appetite 2020-21

As noted in the Governance Report, registers of risks are maintained to ensure that business is delivered safely and effectively. The Risk Appetite Statement sets out the level of risk with which the Social Care Council aims to operate. The Council recognises that it may not always be possible, and not financially affordable, to fully remove uncertainty from a decision and that decisions should be made using the best available information and expertise. When decisions need to be made urgently, the information relied upon and the considerations applied to it should be retained; and the risk culture must embrace openness, support transparency, welcome constructive challenge and promote collaboration, consultation and co-operation.

Risk Appetite Statement

The table below, outlines the Risk Appetite across the key areas of Finance, Compliance, Safety, Service Delivery and Reputation.

Area	Statement	Risk Appetite
Finance	The organisation must comply with the statutory duty to breakeven and therefore must be protected from adverse impact from risks which threaten its financial breakeven position.	Cautious
Compliance	The organisation must be averse to risks that could impact upon its compliance with law and regulation, but should be prepared to accept moderate risk in order to achieve its objectives in relation to raising the profile of the social work and social care workforce and sector leadership.	Cautious → Moderate
Safety	The organisation must be averse to risks that could threaten the safety of users, carers, registrants and staff while recognising that the organisation should be prepared to accept a more open approach to safety risk when pursuing objectives associated with development of the workforce, communication and engagement and sector leadership.	Cautious → Open
Service Delivery	Delivery of the organisations core statutory services must be protected, however having an open to hungry approach to risk will help deliver substantial benefits to service users, registrants, employers and the wider social work and social care sector.	Open → Hungry
Reputation	Damage to the organisations reputation can undermine stakeholder confidence however the organisation is prepared to accept a moderate to hungry impact on its reputation as delivery of objectives will provide significant longer term benefit.	Moderate → Hungry

Risk Appetite Matrix

The matrix below, outlines the Risk Appetite in each of the key areas of Finance, Compliance, Safety, Service Delivery and Reputational for each of the Strategic Themes set out in the 2020-21 Business Plan.

Strategic Theme	Financial	Compliance	Safety	Service Delivery	Reputational
	<i>(Impacts on the financial position and sustainability of the Social Care Council)</i>	<i>(Impacts on the Social Care Council's conformance with legal obligations and stat. duties and its compliance with regulatory requirements)</i>	<i>(Impacts on the safety and wellbeing of staff, registrants, service users, partners/stakeholders and the public)</i>	<i>(Impacts on the intended/expected delivery of the Social Care Council's services)</i>	<i>(Impacts on the Social Care Council's reputation amongst all or some of its stakeholders)</i>
1. To put standards at the heart of social work and social care practice and education and training, so as to support the delivery of effective social care services both now and in the future.	CAUTIOUS	CAUTIOUS	CAUTIOUS	OPEN	MODERATE
2. To ensure that regulation is robust, agile, valued and trusted in order to support good social work and social care practice.	CAUTIOUS	CAUTIOUS	CAUTIOUS	OPEN	MODERATE
3. To support the development of the social work and social care workforce in order that they are able to deliver safe, effective, value led care.	CAUTIOUS	MODERATE	MODERATE	OPEN	OPEN
4. To promote a systems leadership approach that contributes to capacity building that supports leadership at all levels.	CAUTIOUS	MODERATE	OPEN	HUNGRY	HUNGRY
5. To ensure there is effective and meaningful communication and engagement so as to improve the understanding of what the Social Care Council does and the value of the social work and social care workforce.	MODERATE	OPEN	OPEN	HUNGRY	HUNGRY

14 July 2021
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