

Minutes of the Northern Ireland Practice and Education Council Meeting, held on Wednesday 18 September 2024 at 2.00 pm in the Conference Room, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, James House, 2-4 Cromac Avenue, Belfast BT7 2JA

**Present:** Kieran McCormick (Chair)  
Linda Kelly, Chief Executive  
Brenda Kelly  
Eilidh McGregor  
Siobhán Caslin  
Nirmala Bhogal (via Teams)  
Katrin Lehmann  
Karen Diamond (via Teams)  
Ciara Scannell  
Gary Mitchell  
Janine Stockdale

**Apologies:** Bronagh Scott  
Sharon McRoberts

**Did Not Attend:** Emma McIlveen

**In Attendance:** Jill Jackson, Head of Corporate Services  
Brenda Carson, Senior Professional Officer  
Tracey White, Senior Communications Officer  
Angela Reed, Chief Nursing and Midwifery Information Officer, SEHSCT (2.15 pm)

**Secretariat:** Heather Mallon, Council Secretary

## **1.0 Welcome and Apologies**

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting. Apologies were noted from Bronagh Scott and Sharon McRoberts. Chair welcomed and introduced Heather Mallon, the new Council Secretary.

## **2.0 Chair's Business**

### **2.1 Welcome to any Members of the Public**

Chair noted that no members of the public were in attendance at today's meeting.

## 2.2 Council Members – Conflicts of Interest

Members did not declare any conflicts of interest in relation to the agenda items to be discussed at today's Council meeting.

## 2.3 Council Members' Development Day: 5 November 2024

Chair advised that Ms Jackson had circulated a 'hold the date' to members and that further details would be issued nearer to the time. Ms Jackson was awaiting further information from Marie Mallon and the Leadership Centre.

**Action:** *Members to ensure they have completed the SDI questionnaire which was recently recirculated by HSCLC.*

## 2.4 Dates for 2025: Council Meetings and Workshops

Chair proposed the following dates for Council meetings in 2025:

Wednesday 12th March 2025 – 2.00pm to 5.00pm  
Wednesday 25th June 2025 – 2.00pm to 5.00pm  
Wednesday 17th September 2025 – 2.00pm to 5.00pm  
Wednesday 3rd December 2025 – 2.00pm to 5.00pm.

Council members agreed the proposed dates.

**Action:** *Ms Mallon to circulate details of meetings.*

With regard to workshops for 2025, Chair invited members to share their thoughts on the appropriate number of workshops to be held during the year and suggested topics which he would feedback to Ms Scott.

Chair was of the view that two workshops were sufficient in addition to the Board Development Day, attendance at the various Committees and the other activities being part of the Council entailed. Chair proposed an information session on quality improvement given the new focus NIPEC had placed on this as outlined in their new Quality Strategy.

Ms Bhogal concurred that two workshops in the year were sufficient and suggested the topic of navigating social media as a tool to better advocate for NIPEC.

Chair reported that some key themes had come out of the recent Council Members' appraisals and some of these would form the basis of future workshops. For example, the subject of finance had come out strongly through the appraisals and this was to be the subject of the December workshop. Other themes would be discussed later in the agenda.

Ms Jackson advised that she and Ms Carson were completing some work on KPIs and suggested presenting some information to Council members for discussion at the December workshop. As SIRO for NIPEC, Ms Jackson was required to provide assurances to Council on an annual basis. Given that NIPEC does not hold much in the way of personal information, a workshop would be a good forum to discuss how best to report on this statutory requirement.

**Action:** *Ms Jackson and Mrs Carson would provide a report at the December workshop for review and discussion.*

In relation to workshops for 2025, those present agreed that at least two workshops would be sufficient.

**Action:** *Mrs Mallon to link in with the Chair and Ms Scott regarding dates and would circulate these to Council Members in due course.*

## **2.5 Boardroom Apprentice**

Chair reported that unfortunately the Northern Ireland Boardroom Apprentice programme had been put on pause for 2024 due to financial constraints. In the meantime, NIPEC had officially registered their interest in being a Host Board for a future programme should one be commissioned. Chair had spoken to Eileen Mullan at a recent meeting who was hopeful that the programme for 2025 would go ahead.

## **2.6 Register of Council Members' Activity**

Chair thanked those who had submitted their updates. He stressed that the onus was on Council members to submit their returns when requested as it was crucial that all activities were evidenced and captured.

## **2.7 Update on Chair's Leave**

Chair confirmed that Ms Scott had been on leave since 3 September and was due back on 8 October 2024. He had therefore been providing cover in his capacity as Deputy Chair for this period.

## **2.8 Date for Council Members' Social Event**

Chair was of the view that a social event for Council Members would be beneficial, both on a personal level and to further develop connections. Ms Scott had circulated an email prior to her leave asking for preferences for times, dates and venues for a Christmas celebration. After some discussion, it was agreed that an early dinner in January would be more suitable.

**Action:** *Mrs Mallon to link in with Chair with a view to putting options together for a couple of Friday night dates in late January as well as possible venues. Mrs Mallon would then circulate these to identify what would best suit the majority.*

## **2.9 Update on Council Members' Appraisals**

Chair reported that Council Members' appraisals were now all complete. A couple had yet to be submitted to the Department as they required Ms Scott's approval. Chair thanked everyone for their participation in the appraisals. The appraisals had provided some valuable insight around possible topics for workshops, such as finance, social media engagement and training on public speaking to convey messages of the organisation, as well as providing opportunities to observe other Committees.

## **3.0 Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

Minutes of the meeting held on 1 July 2024 had been circulated for approval. Chair asked if members had read the minutes and were happy to approve.

Previous minutes were approved.

## **4.0 Matters Arising**

### **4.1 Updated Action Plan (*Circulated for approval*)**

Chair asked Ms Jackson to take Members through the Action Plan. Ms Jackson advised that only one item currently remained open, the December Council workshop. As previously discussed under Item 2.4, Finance were to attend to provide a brief presentation on budget and reports shared with Council. The second half of the workshop would be allocated to discussion on the best means of presenting KPIs to Council.

## 5.0 Correspondence

### 5.1 **Correspondence from John McKeown, Head of DoH Governance Unit to Accounting Officer re Commissioning of Mid-Year Assurance Statement, issued 27 August 2024** *(Circulated for noting)*

Council Members noted this correspondence.

### 5.2 **Circular HSC(F) 14-2024 Payment of Travelling and Other Allowances to Members Determination (NI) 2024, issued 25 June 2024** *(Circulated for noting)*

Council Members noted this circular.

### 5.3 **HMRC Fraud Alert** *(Circulated for noting)*

Council Members noted this alert.

## 6.0 Operational Performance and Service Improvement

### 6.1 **Encompass Presentation: Angela Reed, SEHSCT**

Chair welcomed Angela Reed, Chief Nursing and Midwifery Information Officer for the South Eastern Trust to the meeting. Ms Reed shared a PowerPoint presentation on Encompass, the new digital record system for health and social care in Northern Ireland.

Ms Reed explained that the roll out of this new system sits within the DHCNI Strategy 2022 – 2030 with a view to making lives better for the people of Northern Ireland using digital services to transform the way health, care and well-being services are delivered. The South Eastern Trust was the first Trust to go live with Encompass in November 2023.

Prior to the introduction of Encompass, there were multiple IT systems in use, with duplicate processes and records and there was an abundance of paper files. This meant that much information sat in silos and was therefore difficult to access in a collaborative way. The Encompass system has meant that now all patient information is stored in one place. Its functionality touches almost everyone involved in patient care, from patient experience staff, medical professionals, pharmacy, to the patients themselves to name a few.

The preparation for Go Live was a particularly exciting but very challenging time. Over 9,000 staff attended training and user logins had to be created. Temporary staff and students proved challenging to get onto the system due to the transient nature of these areas but a workaround was found. Many staff hours were used in the manual migration of both electronic and paper patient data. Much work was put into getting out key messages to staff and the public around what was happening.

Since go live there have been ongoing weekly calls with Trust Directorates and Executive Management Teams to discuss performance. The Trust has had to learn to become more agile, balancing safety and risk to make quicker decisions.

While initial feedback from staff and patients has been positive in the main and this improving all the time, there are still many more lessons to be learnt. Prior to go live it was more difficult to see where the Trust was failing but these areas are much easier to identify now and therefore the Trust can work to address these, which can only be of benefit to service users.

The use of patient wristbands and medication scanning has improved patient safety. Since go live, two early adopter wards saw around a 50% reduction in medical administration near miss incidents and there has been a 27% reduction in omitted medications. A recent patient feedback questionnaire showed that 97% of patients felt reassured by bar coded medications administration. Nursing feedback from the surgical directorate showed that on the whole nurses felt more security when giving medications.

Most departments have provided encouraging feedback, for example, district nurses have reported benefits such as improved communication pathways between community and secondary care resulting in improved holistic person-centred care. The risk posed by lone working has also been reduced due to the use of the hand-held Rover device. The Emergency Department is reporting quicker turnaround times and Pharmacy has seen the elimination of paper and script turnaround times are improving. The benefits are being seen around the other disciplines too.

There are, however, some challenges to be faced. The South Eastern Trust only has one full time PMO, with a small, largely temporary team. The Klas nursing survey of 2022 recommends one full time or part time nurse informaticist per 100 nurses. A strong professional digital team is vital to ensure adequate leadership and staffing to improve digital health approaches to data and its possibilities, governance and safety, future innovation and the ongoing evaluation of digital healthcare.

Each new go live presents new challenges for the South Eastern Trust as all the systems are interconnected meaning workflows need to be monitored very closely during each go live. Digital Health and Social Care NI provides overarching support to help monitor this system.

Once all Trusts have gone live with Encompass, work will commence on the optimisation phase. This will involve incorporating other areas of care such as children's social care and prison health and there is more work to be done to further develop areas such as the MyCare patient app. Northern Ireland is still only at the beginning of its digital journey with many exciting possibilities ahead, for example, we could only be a few years away from the use of ambient AI documentation.

Chair thanked Ms Reed for her interesting and informative presentation. He commented that he found the subject fascinating and the potential the system provided to be very impressive. Chair asked members if they had any questions for Ms Reed. The Chief Executive asked if there had been a sense that the introduction of Encompass had removed the presence at the bedside. Ms Reed advised that feedback would suggest that the opposite is the case. The use of the handheld Rover device allowed nurses to complete some of their documentation on the go, thereby reducing their tech load. This, in turn, was freeing up more time to care. Ms Reed acknowledged that there was still work to be done in this area but that the system was proving to be a useful tool in enabling conversations around care in an appropriate way.

Ms Stockdale expressed concern around the ability of students to access the system given that a large portion of their education took place in the clinical setting. Ms Reed agreed with Ms Stockdale and said that the ideal would be for students to be allocated a login at the very start of their training which they could then take with them as they progressed through their careers in the health service. Unfortunately, the issue of logins was a little disparate right now with challenges around licencing and cost. Ideally there would be a function for universities to avail of the Playground environment but Epic have strict regulations around the use of this.

Mr Mitchell said that he found the subject hugely impressive, especially in relation to what could be done in the future with the likes of AI. Mrs Stockdale agreed and added that it would mean adaptations to how assessments are currently made for example.

Chair wished Ms Reed all the best for the continuing digital journey and thanked her for agreeing to attend the meeting today.

Ms Reed left the meeting at this point (2.50 pm).

**Action:** *Mrs Mallon to circulate a copy of the presentation to Council Members.*

## **6.2 Chief Executive's Report (*Circulated for noting*)**

The Chair invited the Chief Executive to take the Council through the next section of the agenda.

The Chief Executive stated that her report had been circulated prior to the meeting and those present confirmed that they had read same. This report highlighted some of the key aspects of the Chief Executive's work and NIPEC's priorities. Chief Executive wished to draw particular attention to a number of aspects referred to in the report.

The CNO update had drawn attention to Delegation of Practice and concerns around the processes and practices for delegation of nursing and healthcare tasks to non-registered staff. As a result of these concerns, NIPEC had agreed to scope the scale of the tasks which are delegated through the use of Direct Payments. UTV are currently working on a programme on this issue, particularly on the impact of patients transitioning from Children's to Adult Services.

An Exceptional Meeting had been called by the CNO in August to discuss the recent racially motivated civil unrest. The CNO had met with Departmental officials and HSC organisations to ensure maximum support was available for the nurses and midwives impacted by the unrest. NIPEC provided assistance by establishing a link to all Trust/PHA resources for support.

Chief Executive made reference to the HSC workforce statistics published on 30 June which had revealed a high vacancy rate within nursing and midwifery within the system.

With regard to lessons learnt, Chief Executive advised that a recent review had highlighted the need for a project weighting tool. Following testing of a weighting tool, the team have revised the approach to consider staff knowledge of the challenges of gaining stakeholder/partnership engagement. This would be shared in more detail under Item 6.4.



Chief Executive asked Council members if they had any questions. The Chair thanked the Chief Executive for her very informative report, adding that it reflected just how busy she had been. Chair wished to make special mention of the great work NIPEC had been doing in relation to racial intimidation and strongly condemned any attacks on HSC staff in any form, particularly on those from overseas.

Council members and no questions and noted the Chief Executive's report.

**6.3 NIPEC Professional Work Plan 2024-25 – Business Plan objectives progress Monitoring Report from 1 April to 31 August 2024 - Chief Executive (*Circulated for noting*)**

The Chief Executive explained that upon review it was felt that the RAG rating system was not providing enough detail on why certain projects did not progress. There was also a desire to streamline the amount of information being presented to Council.

Chief Executive presented the new Work Plan Dashboard and talked the Council through its various aspects. There had previously been 11 projects showing as not started but having applied the new weighting tool, there was now only one. The Dashboard helped to show what best to focus on and gave a better indication of why certain projects were not progressing. It also provided a clearer idea of the funding and resources each project would require. Following testing of the weighting tool, the team revised the approach to take staff experience and the intuition that comes from that into account. A further phase of the Work Plan Dashboard development would be to test a project assessment scale based on the IHI model.

Chair queried if that meant that the previous four dashboards were now going to be reflected in this one new dashboard for the whole Work Plan. Chief Executive confirmed that it did. She advised that the team would continue to test the weighting tool and would review the results on a quarterly basis.

Chief Executive advised that this work was being supported through the Professional and Business Committee and asked those present if they had any questions. Chair stated that he was reassured that the Professional and Business Committee had assured this piece of work and that the transparency was clear. He was of the view that the Work Plan in its current form was very wordy and therefore quite confusing. He found the new dashboard to be much clearer.

Ms Bhogal advised that Gary Cousins had taken the Professional and Business Committee through the Dashboard a couple of times and they had found it very helpful in understanding the trends and were assured that it was a good approach going forward. Chair passed on his compliments to all those involved for their good work.

Council members noted the NIPEC Professional Work Plan 2024-25 – Business Plan objectives progress Monitoring Report from 1 April to 31 August 2024.

**6.4 Consultation Activity Report (*Circulated for noting*)**

Council Members noted the Consultation Activity Report. Chair stated that any further discussion could be picked up at the December Council meeting.

**6.5 Communications and Engagement Report: Tracey White, Senior Communications Officer (*Circulated for noting*)**

Chair welcomed Tracey White, Senior Communications Officer for NIPEC to the Council meeting and invited her to highlight some of the key aspects of the Communications and Engagement Report previously circulated.

Mrs White advised that, prior to her starting in her role in NIPEC in October 2023, various NIPEC staff carried out communication activities in addition to their own roles. A new Communication and Engagement Strategy had been in development and this would be presented to Council under Item 6.6. As a result of the development of this Strategy, a number of improvements had been introduced with regard to communication and engagement.

The importance of engagement with stakeholders was highlighted and work had been done to build communication networks by reaching out to the Trusts' communications teams and those of other Arms' Length Bodies, as well as developing mechanisms for joint messaging.

The introduction of a communications planner had enabled a whole team approach to forward planning for key events and proactive messaging for key events. This had resulted in an increase in social media engagement. Mrs White advised that, in her capacity as Senior Communications Officer, she is able to signpost colleagues to any relevant issues being reported on social media in real-time to enable better horizon scanning and planning.

New branding guidelines had been developed to help maintain the quality, consistency and integrity of NIPEC's brand image and a photo library of professional, regional photographs was currently being compiled to ensure more relatable images could be used going forward.

NIPEC currently has two websites; the main site plus a careers' website. In response to the recommendations from the recent audit report, a number of improvements had been identified and were actively being taken forward, for example, improving accessibility and the use of website analytics to better inform web development.

Communications was being used to support key projects and feedback from engagement events is captured using a new generic event evaluation form allowing consistent analysis of event engagement.

Chair requested that any questions on the Report be deferred until Mrs White had presented the Communications and Engagement Strategy under the next item on the agenda.

**6.6 Draft Communication and Engagement Strategy: Tracey White, Senior Communications Officer (*Circulated for approval*)**

Chair asked Mrs White to take the Council through the key aspects of the draft Communication and Engagement Strategy previously circulated. Mrs White advised that the overall aim of the Strategy was to enable NIPEC to deliver on their strategic objectives as outlined in the Corporate Plan and Quality Strategy and reflect the importance of the Involvement and Co-Production Strategy.

NIPEC's communication services involve the use of the websites, social media, branding and design and providing communications advice to projects. The use of six communication principles helps to highlight the priorities. These principles are resources, priorities, values, time, voice and guidance and these can flex and bend when the system requires something different.

To support NIPEC in delivering its strategic objectives, the Strategy focuses on three objectives: purpose; people and plan as a means of sense checking. A series of key messages have been developed to support the achievement of their communication and engagement objectives and these are around supporting regional priorities, partnership working to support the health and social care system, the involvement of stakeholders to benefit from their important, lived experience and continual improvement.

Communication and engagement analytics would feed into the Work Plan Dashboard as a means of measuring success. Mrs White advised that going forward an annual Communication and Engagement Report would be produced and brought to Council as had been the practise previously.

Chair thanked Mrs White for her informative presentation of the Communication and Engagement Report and Strategy. He conveyed that it was fantastic to see the communications strategy back on track given that NIPEC was so pivotal in getting messaging out to nurses and midwives. The annual report would provide good assurance to Council.

Chair enquired if consideration was being given to the use of social media platforms other than Facebook and Twitter. Mrs White replied that it was too early to answer that question as yet. Work needed to be done to identify the specific spaces NIPEC's target audience were using now as the landscape had changed. Mrs White added that managing multiple channels would be a huge time commitment for one person to maintain.

Ms Lehmann asked if communications was costed into any new projects. Mrs White said that there was not a large budget for this and that the biggest resource used would be people's time, in-house. The communications planner was used to determine the best use of time.

The Chief Executive stated that Mrs White achieved a lot for one person. It had been recognised that the whole team could do a little more to support communications going forward and they were taking the time to ensure they were using the correct approach. Chief Executive advised that a commitment had been made to get the team upskilled on the likes of Canva so that everything would not have to go to Mrs White.

Mrs Bhogal asked for clarification on the contrast used in the branding guidelines. Mrs White advised that a contrast checker had been used and that it was important not to place text over images. She added that they were learning more about accessibility all the time.

Mrs Bhogal enquired as to how NIPEC knew what people were looking at on their websites. Mrs White replied that they had been working with BSO ITS and using Google analytics to work on the websites. She gave the example of PACE being looked up more frequently as a direct result of the introduction of Encompass. Chief Executive advised that better analytics allowed NIPEC to look at their Work Plan differently and this could be adapted to suit the people engaging with them. Mrs White said that NIPEC were really only at the start of their journey to fully understand how to make the best use of the analytics.

Ms B Kelly asked if NIPEC were planning to stay with Twitter. She was of the view that there could be some quick wins if the right platforms were identified and utilised to establish NIPEC as the guaranteed, professional site to go to amongst its target audience. Ms Stockdale said that in her experience a lot of students were using Tik Tok as their main source of information.

Chair expressed that he found the subject fascinating and that he would be interested to see how this area grew and developed over time.

Ms Scannell and Ms Diamond left at this point (4.30pm).

## **7.0 Corporate Control & Finance**

### **7.1 Report from Standing Committees**

#### **7.1.1 Unconfirmed Minutes of the Audit & Risk Committee held on 26 June 2024 (*Circulated for noting*)**

Council Members noted these minutes.

#### **7.1.2 Confirmed Minutes of the Professional & Business Committee held on 7 June 2024 (*Circulated for noting*)**

Ms Jackson advised that these minutes had been approved at the meeting of the Professional & Business Committee held on 6 September 2024. Council Members noted these minutes.

#### **7.1.3 Unconfirmed Minutes of the Professional & Business Committee held on 6 September 2024 (*Circulated for noting*)**

Council Members noted these minutes.

## 7.2 Finance

### 7.2.1 Financial Summary of Expenditure, Month 4 (Circulated for noting)

Ms Jackson reported that, since circulation, the financial situation had moved on slightly and draft figures were now almost ready for Month 5. As of 31 August, NIPEC had a surplus of £78k with a projected surplus of £42k by yearend. Slippage was largely due to vacancies, which have now been filled; a rebate of a service charge for James House in 2024-25; the release of accruals; and a slight surplus in pay award 2023-24 allocations for the 2023-24 award.

Ms Jackson explained that the award of £42k funding for Ethnic Diversity Officers for the period of Sept 2024 to March 2025 may lead to slightly more slippage depending on the uptake of staff and that the funding had been included in the budget under a separate cost centre for transparency purposes. The slippage from the core budget had allowed NIPEC to identify some potential support from associates and they were currently in the process of seeking Expressions of Interest from suitable candidates. With regard to the Ethnic Diversity Officer posts, a replacement was being sought for the South Eastern Trust and a new post was being recruited for the independent sector.

Ms Jackson advised that she was content that expenditure was as it should be for this point in the financial year and any slippage was all very manageable. She asked if Council Members had any questions.

Chair was delighted to see the extension of the Ethnic Diversity posts, albeit on a temporary basis.

Ms B Kelly enquired as to the budget allotted for the printing of stationery, given the paperless and sustainability agenda. Ms Jackson replied that printing had drastically reduced. Documents tended to be printed on an as and when basis but this had become the exception rather than the rule. The last year had seen a photocopying spend of around £1k. Chief Executive advised that the reduction of printing was one of the goals NIPEC planned to measure. She added that NIPEC were committed to greener ways of working.

Ms McGregor asked for clarification of the £65k variance in relation to Other Pay Costs as noted on page 5 of the Finance Memo, Month 4. Ms Jackson advised that, at the time of producing the memo, all figures had been checked and were correct. It was difficult to say specifically without all the documents in front of her but Ms Jackson said that it was likely to be as a result of the accrual for the pay increase. The Chief Executive shared this view.

Council Members noted the update.

**Action:** Ms Jackson undertook to ask Muriel Lockhart to look at printing spend by way of demonstration that the expenditure had reduced.

**Action:** Ms Jackson to obtain clarification on the £65k and feed this back to the Chair.

### **7.2.2 Budget overview for upcoming years**

Ms Jackson reported that she had met with the Department of Health at the Finance Forum on 4 September and had received an update regarding the in-year position and that of the next few years. In-year there had been a £130 million shortfall in the HSC budget, which was needed to breakeven. This figure did not include the recently announced pay rises which will require further funding.

Ms Jackson advised that currently there was no requirement for additional efficiencies from small ALBs but depending on the position nearer the end of the year, ALBs could be asked to tighten spending further, for example, by suppressing vacancies until 2025-26. Overall Ms Jackson was of the view that this was positive news: Both the PHA and BSO were each required to return £1 million over the summer.

The Department of Finance were currently looking at the 2025-26 requirement. The Department of Health require an additional £1 billion just to maintain the status quo. There was a suggestion that there may be a move towards three-year budgets. The first year would be a single year, 2026-27 would move to a two-year budget, with the move to a three year budget coming thereafter.

Ms Bhogal enquired if there had been any indication of an intention to trim the budget with the introduction of a three-year budget and Ms Jackson said that this was not evident as yet. Chief Executive was of the view that a three-year budget would lend itself better to managing accruals. At present any surplus was non-recurrent.

Ms Lehmann left the meeting at this point (5.05 pm).

### **7.3 Corporate Risk Register 2024-25, Version 4 (*Circulated for approval*)**

Ms Jackson referred to the Corporate Risk Register circulated prior to the meeting. There had been discussion at the recent Business Team meeting around whether the score of Risk 1 could be reduced now that all vacant posts had been filled. It had been agreed to give the new staff time to settle into their posts before this was reduced.

With regard to Risk 6, the current classification indicated a low risk and a lot of work had been done to mitigate this risk. This would be presented at the October meeting of the Audit and Risk Committee when it would be proposed that this risk be removed from the register.

Chair complimented the new look Corporate Risk Register which he found to be clear and easier to read.

Council members approved the Corporate Risk Register.

### **7.4 KPIs 2024-25 (*Circulated for noting*)**

With reference to the KPI Activity document previously circulated, Ms Jackson reported that everything was currently on target. Internal Audit had recommended that NIPEC review the indicators as they would only deem three or four of these to be actual KPIs. The others would be considered to be measurements. As already agreed under Item 2.4, part of the workshop in December would be used to allow Council the opportunity to discuss proposals.

Those present noted the KPI document.



## **7.5 Equality Annual Progress Report 2023-24 (*Circulated for approval*)**

With regard to the Equality Annual Progress Report shared prior to the meeting, Ms Jackson advised that this was an annual, statutory requirement that followed a template issued by the Equality Commission NI. The deadline for submission was 31 August, therefore this Report had already been submitted to the Equality Commission in draft form with the caveat that this could be amended once it had been presented to Council. The Report had previously been presented to and approved at a recent Business Team meeting.

There were no questions on the Report and Council were happy to approve same.

**Action:** *Final version to now be submitted to the Equality Commission.*

## **7.6 NIPEC Policies**

- 7.6.1 Records Management**
- 7.6.2 Freedom of Information**
- 7.6.3 Adverse Incidents**
- 7.6.4 Publication Scheme**
- 7.6.5 Waste Management**
- 7.6.6 Data Protection Policy**

Ms Jackson referred to the updated policies previously circulated and asked Council Members if they had any questions. Chair queried if some of these policies were regional and therefore outside of the control of NIPEC and Ms Jackson confirmed that they were.

Council Members approved the updated policies.

## **8.0 Safety and Quality**

### **8.1 Draft Annual Quality Report 2023-24 (*Circulated for approval*)**

Chair welcomed Brenda Carson, Senior Professional Officer to the meeting and asked her to present the draft Annual Quality Report for 2023-24 previously circulated to Council.

Mrs Carson explained that the Annual Quality Report is a requirement for all health and care organisations set out in NI Quality Strategy – Quality 2020 and has to adhere to a set format. This format provided a challenge as it is the same one used by the Trusts also but it is hoped that there will be more flexibility around this in the future.

The plan would be to publish this Report on the NIPEC website on World Quality Day on 14 November should Council grant their approval today. The Quality Strategy would be launched on the same day. There is now an opportunity for the Annual Quality Report for 2024-25 to focus on the Strategy. Mrs Carson drew attention to the look and feel of the Report. Much thought had been given to ensuring that it was not simply a flat document but came to life visually.

Chair asked those present if they had any questions for Mrs Carson. Ms Lehmann pointed out a minor typographical error on page 9 in relation to the Remuneration Committee. Chair commented that he had found the cover sheet to be helpful and he found the Report to be particularly relevant to today's discussions. The Report provided NIPEC with an opportunity to showcase some great work.

There were no questions and Council members were happy to approve the Annual Quality Report.

Mrs White and Mrs Carson left the meeting.

## **8.2 DoH Covid-19 Public Inquiry Group**

Chair invited Ms Jackson to provide the Council with her update on the Covid-19 Public Inquiry Group. Ms Jackson reported that the recent meetings had been cancelled. She had received an update from Department of Health on 11 September giving an overview of Modules 1 to 9. Ms Jackson said that members would be aware that the Inquiry sat in Belfast from 30 April for 3 weeks. Health and Social Care organisations have been encouraged to follow progress on the website. A further update would be issued by the Department of Health in mid-December 2024.

Members noted the update.

## **9.0 Any Other Business**

There was no further business discussed. The Chair concluded business and thanked Ms Reed, Mrs White, Mrs Carson, Ms Jackson and Mrs Mallon for their contributions at this afternoon's meeting.

## **10.0 Date, Time and Venue of Next Meeting**

The next Council Workshop date is **4 December 2024 at 10.30am:**  
Finance

The next public meeting date of NIPEC Council is **4 December 2024 at 2.00pm**

Both will be held in **James House.**