



Minutes of the Northern Ireland Practice and Education Council Meeting, Wednesday 18th March 2020 at 2.00 pm in the Meeting Room, NIPEC Headquarters, Centre House, 79 Chichester Street, Belfast, BT1 4JE.

Present: Professor C Curran, OBE, Chair
Mrs A McLernon, OBE, Chief Executive
Mrs A Baxendale, Deputy Chair, via teleconference
Ms D O'Donnell, via teleconference
Ms D Oktar Campbell, via teleconference
Dr V Tohani, via teleconference
Mrs C Rice, via teleconference

In Attendance: Miss J Jackson, Head of Corporate Services

Secretariat: Mrs D Meleady, Personal Assistant

1.0 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Professor C McArdle, Mr P Davidson and Mrs Lisa Houlihan.

2.0 CHAIR'S BUSINESS

- 2.1 It was noted that no members of the public attended the meeting. Council Members noted the Change of Venue for the meeting due to the current situation associated with COVID-19. Chair stated that she was indebted to Council Members for joining the meeting via teleconferencing.
- 2.2 It was noted that there were no Conflicts of Interest from Council Members.
- 2.3 A copy of the Board Governance Self-Assessment submission for 2019-2020 had previously been circulated for comment. No comments had been received and Council Members were happy to agree and approve the submission.
- 2.4 A copy of the Declaration of Interest Form for Council Members had previously been circulated. A Baxendale indicated that her completed form was in the post. D Meleady to follow up with those Council Members whose forms were still outstanding.

ACTION:

DM to email Council Members whose forms are still outstanding to be returned as soon as possible.

- 2.5 It was noted that the Chief Executive report had been tabled at Agenda Item 6.1 and a copy of this was also emailed to Council Members for the meeting.
- 2.6 It was noted that the Draft Audit and Risk Minutes for the meeting held on the 11th February 2020 had been tabled at Agenda Item 7.2.2 and a copy of this was also emailed to Council Members for the meeting.
- 2.7 It was noted that a Report on the Industrial Action held between November 2019 and January 2020 had been tabled at Agenda Item 7.10 and a copy of this was also emailed to Council Members for the meeting.

3.0 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

- 3.1 A copy of the Minutes of the meeting held on the 20th November 2019 (NIPEC/4/2019) had previously been circulated.

Council Members agreed the Minutes.

4.0 MATTERS ARISING

- 4.1 Detailed in updated Action Plan (***Circulated***)

A copy of the updated Action Plan had previously been circulated. It was noted that items had been actioned and updated.

Chair indicated that Meetings could continue to be done via teleconferencing if this facilitated Council Members particularly given the current situation with COVID-19.

Council Members noted that there was still no progression on the renewal of NIPEC Chair and NED Council vacancies from the Public Appointments Unit (PAU). Chair had discussed the matter with CNO's office in February 2020 with a view to requesting that the existing vacancies be progressed initially and that the remainder of members, including Chair, have their terms extended. This would ensure business continuity and good governance.

Chair agreed to seek a progress update from Sponsor Branch.

ACTION:

Chair to seek a progress update from Sponsor Branch regarding NIPEC Council vacancies.

5.0 CORRESPONDENCE

- 5.1 It was noted a copy of the letter dated 29th November 2019 from Mr R Pengelly, Permanent Secretary and HSC Chief Executive, DoH, regarding Industrial Action had previously been circulated.
- 5.2 It was noted a copy of the letter dated 6th December 2019 from Professor C McArdle, Chief Nursing Officer, DoH, regarding Q2020 Attributes Framework had previously been circulated.

- 5.3 It was noted that a copy of the letter dated 7th January 2020 from Mr R Pengelly, Permanent Secretary and HSC Chief Executive, DoH, regarding Mid-Year Accountability Meeting had previously been circulated.
- 5.4 It was noted that a copy of the letter dated 28th January 2020 from Ms A Sutcliffe, CBE, Chief Executive and Registrar, NMC, regarding Nursing and Midwifery Council Communication Plans for EU Exit had previously been circulated.
- 5.5 It was noted that a copy of the letter dated 6th February 2020 from Dr M McBride, Chief Medical Officer, DoH, regarding Coronavirus: (A) Key Public Health Advice, (B) Action to be taken by Public Authorities had previously been circulated.
- 5.6 It was noted that a copy of the Memo dated 17th February 2020 from Mr P Lavery, Senior HR Manager, BSO, regarding May Day Bank Holiday 2020 had previously been circulated.

6.0 OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE AND SERVICE IMPROVEMENT

6.1 Chief Executives Report

A copy of the Chief Executives Report was tabled and emailed to Council Members for information and will be appended to the end of the March Council Minutes. Mrs A McLernon took Council Members through her report and highlighted specific activities, providing clarification as required to Council Members on the following areas:

- Update on Covid-19 and the impact on NIPEC Work
- Update on Transformation Projects
- NIPEC Staff and Homeworking

Mrs A Baxendale indicated that if there was anything Council Members could do to assist NIPEC during the emergency COVID-19 arrangements not to hesitate to seek this from Council.

Discussion ensued regarding broader support for the HSC including the potential requirement for nursing staff to be needed to provide direct patient care should the need arise. Mrs A McLernon informed the meeting that advice had been sought from BSO HR regarding cover and systems required for staff deployment to other organisations and the response for this is awaited.

Mrs D Oktar Campbell asked about the NMC Statement endorsing flexibility and a temporary Register for 3rd year students. In responding to this Mrs A McLernon indicated that the Chief Nursing Officer was very actively involved at UK level with the NMC and other UK CNOs on behalf of Northern Ireland.

Dr V Tohani thanked the Chief Executive for a very comprehensive report.

6.2 Consultation Activity Report

A copy of the consultation activity report had previously been circulated. There were no further updates.

7.0 CORPORATE CONTROL & FINANCE

7.1 Head of Corporate Services Report

A copy of the Head of Corporate Services Report had previously been circulated.

7.2 Report from Standing Committee

7.2.1 A copy of the confirmed Minutes of A&R meeting A&RC/4/2019 held on the 8th October 2019 had previously been circulated.

7.2.2 A copy of the unconfirmed Minutes of A&R Meeting A&R/1/2020 held on the 11th February 2020 had been tabled and emailed to Council Members.

Dr V Tohani had nothing further to report.

7.3 Financial Management Summary

A copy of the Financial Management Summary for Month 10 together with a summary of NIPEC's allocations and funds retracted as at 11th March 2020 had previously been circulated. Ms J Jackson indicated that based on expenditure predictions, NIPEC was on course to achieve financial breakeven for the year.

At the quarterly Finance Forum in February 2020, the Department of Health had suggested that allocations for 2020-21 would be maintained at the 2019-20 level with organisations expected to absorb the first 1% of any pay rise. The Department of Health had advised that this would be confirmed in NIPEC'S opening Allocation Letter for 2020-21 which was expected in mid-March 2020.

It was noted that funding for the Transformation Nursing and Midwifery Data Project would cease on the 30th April 2020 and Council Members would be updated if there were any further changes to the Future Nurse Future Midwife Project which is anticipated to be funded beyond this period. The Chief Executive remains in ongoing discussions with the Department of Health regarding confirmation of this and in the context of ensuring timely information is available to ensure there is no financial risk to NIPEC.

7.4 Corporate Risk Register 2019-20, Ver: 12 February 2020

A copy of the Month 12 Corporate Risk Register for 2019-20 had previously been circulated and was available on the NIPEC website. Ms J Jackson discussed with members the inclusion of a risk relating to Covid-19 in the first version of the 2020-21 register.

7.5 KPIs

A copy of the KPI Report had previously been circulated.

Council Members noted that the cumulative figure for 30 day payments remains at Amber but there has been gradual improvement with December 2019, January and February 2020 being on target.

Dr V Tohani noted the excellent absence figure and enquired if this was likely to be affected due to the potential absence of staff linked to the Covid-19 outbreak. Mrs A McLernon assured members that advice had been received from BSO HR confirming that any such absence would not be included in normal absence monitoring statistics but would be recorded separately.

Mrs C Rice left the meeting at this point.

7.6 NIPEC Annual Report & Accounts 2019-20

This was discussed earlier in the meeting at Agenda item 2.4 in regard to Council Members Declaration of Interest forms information which is required for the NIPEC Annual Report and Accounts for 2019-20

7.7 NIPEC Accommodation

Renewal of Lease

Ms J Jackson confirmed that the Accommodation Lease for Centre House had been signed and extended until 31st August 2022. Council Members noted the increase in rent as being 58.4% with effect from 1st December 2019 and the likelihood that the service charges would also increase. NIPEC was able to absorb the increase for the 4 months of 2019-2020 from slippage in the budget, however, the full year effect will present a financial pressure for NIPEC in 2020-2021. This had been raised via Sponsor Branch in Department of Health, with the Financial Management Unit.

Members also noted that Patient Client Council had ceased leasing accommodation from NIPEC with effect from 28th February 2020.

James House Project

The Floor Plans for the new accommodation in James House were signed off in January 2020. A Transition Management Working Group has been established to oversee the move to James House. The first meeting took

place on the 24th February 2020 with representation from all organisations including NIPEC, due to move to the building.

7.8 Draft NIPEC Business Plan

Council Members noted that a copy of the draft NIPEC Business Plan for 2020-21 was forwarded to the Chief Nursing Officer on 17th February 2020 and as of yet no reply had been received. It was also noted that this could be revised given the current situation with COVID-19 and Council Members indicated that they were happy with this approach should the plan need to be reviewed.

7.9 NIPEC Corporate Plan from April 2021

Council Members noted that this was tabled recently with the Business Team and it was agreed that the Department of Health would be contacted for guidance regarding alignment with a new Programme for Govern (PfG) as the Assembly term of two years will have one remaining year – prior to development of the extant plan the previous one was extended by one year to align to PfG. This will remain under review and will be retained on the Council Agenda as a standing item.

7.10 Impact of Industrial Action Report

Council Members noted that a copy of the Industrial Action Report was tabled for their information.

7.11 Management Statement Financial Memorandum between DoH and NIPEC/DAO (DoF) 05/19 – Partnership Agreement Template

Council Members noted that the above Memorandum is to be replaced with a new Partnership Agreement which is scheduled to be phased in throughout 2020-21. The Agreement Template will be drawn up by Sponsor Branch and the relevant Arms' Length Body (ALB) which will set out the overall governance framework within which an individual ALB operates. The agreement will be more flexible and bespoke to each organisation. There was to be a workshop held on the 30th March 2020 regarding this but it was stood down due to preparations across the HSC in respect of Covid-19. This agreement will have a light touch annual review and a formal review every three years.

7.12 NIPEC Council Membership Terms

A summary of the current position had previously been circulated.

7.13 IHRD ALB Board Effectiveness Sub group workshop

Council Members noted as part of the IHRD Programme, the ALB Board Effectiveness sub-group drafted a HSC Board Member Handbook to provide advice and guidance for Executive Directors and Non-Executive Directors of

ALBs. The draft hand book contains a range of case studies, designed to take Board Members through real life scenarios, as well as prompts to help them carry out their scrutiny role effectively.

In order to test the case studies and identify any gaps in the guidance, the Sub Group held a workshop on the 9th January 2020 which Ms J Jackson, Head of Corporate Services and Dr V Tohani, Council Member attended and found useful. The final version of the Handbook is scheduled to be launched at the NICON Conference on the 30th April 2020 and will be shared with members once received.

7.14 5-year review of our Equality Scheme by 31st March 2021

It was noted that the Annual SLA meeting with the BSO Equality Unit took place on the 30th January 2020. A key area of focus for 2020-21 is a 5 Year Review of Equality Schemes which are due for submission to the Equality Commission by April 2021.

NIPEC will be supported by BSO Equality Unit in undertaking this review and Council will have a role to play in this work, with ratification of the final document at the March 2021 meeting.

8.0 SAFETY AND QUALITY

8.1 NIPEC Professional Work Plan 2019/20 – Progress Monitoring Report: November 2019 to March 2020

A copy of the above Professional Work Plan for 2019/20 Progress Monitoring Report had previously been circulated. Council Members noted that there were no Reds or Ambers.

Ms D O'Donnell stated that she was hugely impressed with the Work Plan and the work that staff were undertaking.

Mrs A Baxendale thought it would be a good idea, given that core work was now being stood down, that NIPEC should capture the amount of work they were now doing supporting other Organisations in meeting their needs in the current health crisis. It would be a positive action to look back upon on how NIPEC supported and influenced other Organisations at a future date. Chair agreed that this was a really well-made point. It was agreed that the Industrial Action (IA) model would be a good starting point to capture this work and that Ms J Jackson would discuss a method for recording the work with her professional colleagues.

ACTION:

Ms J Jackson to look at the Industrial Action Model to capture work that NIPEC is doing on behalf of and to support other Organisations and discuss with her professional colleagues.

9.0 CHIEF NURSING OFFICER UPDATE

There was no update from the Chief Nursing Officer given the current situation, but Council wanted it recorded that they believed the Chief Nursing Officer was doing a great job for Northern Ireland and were very appreciative of her leadership.

10.0 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no further business. Chair thanked Council Members for joining via Teleconferencing and sincerely hoped that they and their families would stay safe and well during this uncertain time.

11.0 DATE, TIME AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING

The next public meeting of NIPEC Council will be on 24th June 2020 at 10.30 am, in the Meeting Room, NIPEC, Chichester Street, Belfast.



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12.0 CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

There was no Confidential Business.