



Minutes of the Northern Ireland Practice and Education Council Meeting, held on Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021 at 11.00 am. This meeting was held via zoom.

**PRESENT:** Professor C Curran, OBE, Chair  
Mrs A McLernon, OBE, Chief Executive  
Mrs A Baxendale, Deputy Chair  
Mrs C Rice  
Mrs L Houlihan  
Ms D O'Donnell  
Mr P Davidson  
Dr V Tohani

In Attendance: Ms J Jackson, Head of Corporate Services

Secretariat: Mrs D Meleady, Personal Assistant

## **1.0 APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Professor C McArdle and Mrs D Oktar-Campbell

## **2.0 CHAIR'S BUSINESS**

2.1 To welcome members of the public to the meeting

It was noted that no members of the public attended the online meeting.

2.2 Council Members were asked if there were any Conflicts of Interest. It was noted that there were no Conflicts of Interest from any of the Council Members.

2.3 Council Members noted that the Management-Statement-and-Financial-Memorandum MSFM-Between-DOH-and-NIPEC-2017 is on the NIPEC website for regular use/reference by Council Members.

2.4 Council Members noted that the extension of Chief Executive's secondment had been secured until June 2022. Professor Curran thanked Mrs McLernon and also thanked the DoH colleagues for being flexible and approving her continued secondment to NIPEC.

2.5 A copy of the NIPEC Council Membership Terms – Summary Sheet had previously been circulated. It was noted that the Chair's vacancy would be advertised shortly and that extensions to Professor Curran, Mr P Davidson and Mrs A Baxendale had been agreed until September 2021. Professor Curran indicated that she would be in touch with the Public Appointments

Unit to query if there would be further extensions to ensure the Council Meetings remain quorate.

- 2.6 Council Members noted receipt of Circular IHRD 01/2021 regarding HSC Board Member Handbook, A Resource to Support the Delivery of Safe and Effective Care. It was noted that Chairs of Arm's Length Bodies should bring this Handbook to the attention of all their Board Members and that this is a resource that can be referenced when required.

A copy of the Assurance Template was to be completed and signed off by Professor Curran indicating that this had been done.

A copy of the link <http://www.health-ni.gov.uk/publications/hsc-board-member-handbook> to be sent out to Council Members to review.

**ACTION:**

**Professor Curran to complete, sign and return the Assurance Template that this had been completed.**

**Mrs D Meleady to send the above link out to Council Members.**

- 2.7 It was noted that Professor Curran received a letter to HSC Chairs regarding Consultation on Policy Proposals for a Duty of Candour and Being Open. Council Members were informed that Mrs Angela Reed, Senior Professional Officer, was leading on the NIPEC response to this and that a workshop was being held to bring awareness of the consultation throughout the system. A NIPEC response was being drafted by Mrs A Reed.

At this point of the meeting it was agreed to bring forward Agenda Item 7.6 NIPEC Annual Report and Accounts 2020 – 2021 to facilitate attendance of a member .

Professor Curran invited Dr Vinod Tohani, Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee to present the report to Council Members following the Audit and Risk Committee Meeting that had taken place immediately prior to Council.

*“As Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee I am pleased today to formally present to the Council, for consideration, the **‘NIPEC Annual Report and Accounts for 2020-21’***

*This document was presented to the Audit & Risk Committee at this morning's meeting together with a draft copy of the External Auditor's **‘Report to those charged with Governance’ (RTTCWG)**, issued 25<sup>th</sup> June 2021.*

*In the draft RTTCWG, there were a number of outstanding issues however I can confirm that at this morning's meeting, NIAO were able to confirm that these issues have been resolved.*

*In the draft, the External Auditor has given an assurance that the accounts represented a **‘True & Fair’** view of the state of NIPEC's affairs as at the 31 March*

*2021 and the proposed audit opinion is “that the Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG) will certify the 2020/21 financial statements with an unqualified audit opinion, without modification. Based on this, I am pleased to confirm that the Annual Report and Accounts were approved by the Audit & Risk Committee.”*

Council Members noted the Report from the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee and agreed to sign off the Annual Report and Accounts for 2020 – 2021.

Professor Curran thanked Ms Jackson and Audit & Risk Committee Members for their support with this.

### **3.0 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

3.1 Minutes of the meeting held on the 10<sup>th</sup> March 2021 (NIPEC/1/2021) for consideration.

A copy of the Minutes of the virtual meeting held on the 10<sup>th</sup> March 2021 (NIPEC/1/2021) had been previously circulated for consideration. Professor Curran asked Council Members if they had any matters of accuracy of which there were none.

Council Members accepted and agreed the Minutes from the virtual meeting held on the 10<sup>th</sup> March 2021.

**Mrs C Rice left the meeting at this point.**

### **4.0 MATTERS ARISING**

4.1 Action Plan

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

Mrs McLernon thanked Council Members and Ms Jackson for the huge input they have put in regarding approval of NIPEC Policies.

### **5.0 CORRESPONDENCE**

5.1 It was noted that a letter dated 12<sup>th</sup> March 2021 had been received from Robin Swann, MLA, Minister for Health regarding Rebuilding HSC Services. This letter had previously been circulated.

5.2 It was noted that a letter dated 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2021 had been received from L’averne Montgomery regarding ALB update and end of year Sponsorship. This letter had previously been circulated.

5.3 It was noted that a letter dated 19<sup>th</sup> March 2020 had been received from Robin Swann, MLA, Minister for Health regarding Temporary Changes to HSC Framework – Consultation Analysis Report. This letter had previously been circulated.

- 5.4 It was noted that an Email dated 8<sup>th</sup> April 2021 had been received from Investors in People regarding NIPEC Re-accreditation Award. This email had previously been circulated.
- 5.5 It was noted that a letter dated 16<sup>th</sup> April 2021 had been received from Robin Swann, MLA, Minister for Health regarding Rebuilding HSC Services. This letter had previously been circulated.
- 5.6 It was noted that a letter dated 30<sup>th</sup> April 2021 had been received from Robin Swann, MLA, Minister for Health regarding Rebuilding HSC Services. This letter had previously been circulated.
- 5.7 It was noted that a letter dated 10<sup>th</sup> May 2021 had been received from Robin Swann, MLA, Minister for Health regarding Rebuilding HSC Services. This letter had previously been circulated.
- 5.8 It was noted that an email dated 10<sup>th</sup> May 2021 had been received from Professor C McArdle, Chief Nursing Officer regarding Enhancing Clinical Care Framework and Care Home Clinical Care Network web pages. This email had previously been circulated.
- 5.9 It was noted that a letter dated 17<sup>th</sup> May 2021 had been received from Mr R Pengelly, Permanent Secretary regarding Review of Current Business Model for Commissioning Post Registration Education for Nurses, Midwives and Allied Health Professionals. This letter had previously been circulated.
- 5.10 It was noted that a letter dated 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2021 had been received from Robin Swann, MLA, Minister for Health regarding Rebuilding HSC Services. This letter had previously been circulated.
- 5.11 It was noted that a letter dated 4<sup>th</sup> June 2021 had been received from Robin Swann, MLA, Minister for Health regarding Rebuilding HSC Services. It was noted that this letter had previously been circulated.
- 5.12 It was noted that a letter dated 11<sup>th</sup> June 2021 had been received from Robin Swann, MLA, Minister for Health regarding Rebuilding HSC Services. It was noted that this letter had previously been circulated.
- 5.13 It was noted that a letter dated 15<sup>th</sup> June 2021 had been received from Robin Swann, MLA, Minister for Health regarding Elective Care Framework. This letter had previously been circulated.
- 5.14 It was noted that a Circular IHRD 01/2021 had been received from Andrew Dawson, Director of Quality, Safety and Improvement regarding HSC Board Member Handbook, A Resource to Support the Delivery of Safe and Effective Care. This was reference to earlier in the Agenda under Chair's business.
- 5.15 It was noted that a letter dated 24<sup>th</sup> June 2021 had been received from Robin Swann, MLA, Minister for Health regarding Rebuilding HSC Services. This letter had previously been circulated.

## **6.0 OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE AND SERVICE IMPROVEMENT**

### **6.1 Chief Executives Report**

A copy of the Chief Executive's Report had previously been circulated via out late mailing.

Mrs McLernon updated Council Members on her report noting the following:

- NIPEC Business Plan has been aligned to the Nursing and Midwifery Task Group and still remains in draft pending a reply from the DoH.

- NIPEC has undertaken work to support the Covid-19 vaccination programme with a number of staff delivering vaccinations in the SSE Arena, Belfast. NIPEC offered 76 hours and 27 of those hours were accepted during April and May 2021. Mrs McLernon thanked those staff who were involved in this.
- Delivering Care – In year funding of £20m and NIPEC has been included to receive part of this for two band 8A professional staff.
- Recording Care – This project remains paused. Mrs McLernon will be having a meeting with the CNO and Chair of the project Mrs N Patterson to agree the way forward as resources will be needed to progress this work.
- Two Senior Professional Officers are facilitating two Northern Ireland workshops in relation to the NMC Consultation on Draft Standards for Community and Public Health Nursing. The aim of these events is to raise awareness of the NMC's consultation and to inform participant's responses to the consultation either individually or as an organisation.
- Enabling Professionalism – Products anticipated to be launched during 2021
- Delegation – Work continuing to progress in partnership with the NI Social Care Council.
- District Nursing Career Pathway - The work of this group continues to be progressed and development of job descriptions for Advanced Practice and Consultant Nurse Roles.

Mrs A Baxendale, Deputy Chair, is a member of this project and she stated that this Project was an outstanding example of expertise and collaboration from members of the project across the system. Mrs Baxendale has felt it has been a huge privilege as a Council Member to be involved and to experience first-hand NIPEC staff in action.

- Peri-operative Nursing – Final Report has been sent to the Chief Nursing Officer. Mrs McLernon met with the Ministry of Defence who have been invited to join the project group.
- Health & Social Wellbeing Committee – CE extended thanks to the Committee as they have been essential in keeping staff motivated during the pandemic.
- Workforce – A number of retirements were noted and the return of a Senior Professional Officer from a career break.

Professor Curran thanked Mrs Baxendale for her positive comments on her experience of working with a project. She also thanked Mrs McLernon on the amount of work that staff have undertaken, and the flexibility that staff have shown in respect of the continued work during the pandemic. Professor Curran and Council Members would like to convey their thanks to all staff.

## 6.2 Consultation Activity Report

A copy of the above Report had previously been circulated. Council Members were invited to respond to any of the consultations listed. It was agreed that the date of the NIPEC workshop taking place regarding the Duty of Candour consultation would be sent to Council Members for information and to register if they wished to attend.

**ACTION:**

**D Meleady to send out date of the Duty of Candour consultation workshop to Council Members.**

**7.0 CORPORATE CONTROL & FINANCE**

7.1 Head of Corporate Services Report

A copy of the Head of Corporate Services Report which provided an update of the key issues affecting corporate services since the March 2021 Council meeting had previously been circulated.

7.2 Report from Standing Committee:

7.2.1 A copy of the confirmed Minutes of A&R Meeting A&R/1/2021 held on the 16<sup>th</sup> February 2021 had previously been circulated.

7.2.2 A copy of the unconfirmed Minutes of the A&R Meeting A&R/2/2021 held on the 18<sup>th</sup> May 2021 had previously been circulated. It was noted that these minutes had been approved at the Audit & Risk meeting held this morning.

7.3 Financial Management Summary

7.3.1 Resource Budget Allocations 2021/22

Council Members noted that NIPEC had received the following two Allocation letters. The Opening Allocation letter for 2021-22 on 7<sup>th</sup> May 2021, and the second Allocation letter in respect of funding for the continuation of the Future Nurse Future Midwife project which was received on the 16<sup>th</sup> June 2021. Copies of these letters had previously been circulated.

Ms Jackson advised Council Members that NIPEC's opening budget had been held at the same level as 2020–21 with the only additional sum of £27k to cover Agenda for Change uplift in salaries in 2020 – 21. It was noted also that NIPEC were not required to absorb the first 1% of any pay award for 2021–22 as this would be allocated in full by the Department of Health.

7.3.2 Financial Summary of Expenditure – Month 2

A copy of the above Summary was circulated via late mailing.

Ms Jackson took Council Members through the Summary indicating that the figures in the memo were those reflected in the Month 2 Financial Monitoring Return (covering the period up to 31<sup>st</sup> May 2021) submitted to the Department of Health.

Council Members noted that currently NIPEC is showing a year end surplus of £158k which is largely due to a number of vacancies

including 2 retirements that took place in May 2021. It is planned to replace these posts which will reduce the surplus going forward. As of Month 2 NIPEC is showing a breakeven position due to profiling the budget to show Associate spend from August 2021 onwards.

#### 7.4 Corporate Risk Register 2021-22, Version:3

A copy of the above Risk Register had previously been circulated.

Ms Jackson updated Council Members on the following risks and indicated that a number of the risks had rolled forward from 2020 - 21:

##### Risk 5: Chief Executive Secondment

This was a new risk concerning the Chief Executive's secondment to NIPEC which was due to end on the 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021. It has been noted that an extension has been granted and as a result this risk is now closed.

##### Risk 6: Cyber Security

This Risk has further been expanded to reflect the recent QUB Cyber-attack. Currently emails between QUB and the HSC remain suspended with some temporary email accounts set up to allow some priority correspondence. HSC SIROs have requested further assurances including confirmation that data on a HSC inventory has all been transferred to new servers in order to restore the email service in full.

In addition a new Risk has been added – **Risk 12** – which describes the risk to the HSC network in the event of a cyber-attack on a supplier or partner organisation resulting in the compromise of the HSC Network. This additional Risk was agreed by the regional HSC SIRO group and agreement was reached to include it on all HSC risk registers. It was noted that Ms Jackson continues to participate in regional HSC SIRO meetings and Council Members were also updated on a data breach on the Health and Safety Executive in ROI.

##### Risk 8: Online Portfolio/Careers Website

Ms Jackson also informed Council Members of a new risk around the security of data on the Online Portfolio. Ms Jackson assured members that NIPEC has worked with BSO ITS to mitigate the risk and received assurance that it is low however due to this and the increasing frequency of IT related issues, NIPEC had requested that an IT & Websites' audit be included in the Audit Plan for 2021-22. Council Members noted that the number of risks on the register which are IT/Cyber security related are 5 out of 12 and agreed with the steps taken to address this via an internal audit.

#### 7.5 KPIs 2021-22

It was noted that a copy of the above report had previously been circulated. Ms Jackson informed Council Members that figures up to end May 2021 were on target for both Absence and Prompt Payment – 100% for both 30 and 10 days.

Ms Jackson informed Council Members that three Assembly Questions were raised relating to the following:

- funding for the centenary of the establishment of NI;
- payment of corporation tax; and
- health surveys in relation to West Belfast and Lagan Valley.

#### 7.6 NIPEC Annual Report and Accounts for 2020-2021

This agenda item was **dealt with earlier**

#### 7.7 Council Members noted as part of the Audit & Risk Terms of Reference, an Annual Report of activity is submitted to the June Council Meeting. The Report highlights key activities carried out by the Committee during 2020-21 and was approved at the Audit & Risk Committee meeting held on the 18<sup>th</sup> May 2021.

Council Members were content to approve the Report.

**Professor Curran at this point welcomed Mrs L Houlihan to the meeting and confirmed that she had no conflicts of interest.**

#### 7.8 Equality:

##### 7.8.1 NIPEC 5 Year Review of Equality Scheme

A copy of the above Scheme was previously circulated for comment and approval. Council Members were asked to ratify the final Report which is due to be submitted to the Equality Commission NI (ECNI) by 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021. Council Members ratified the NIPEC 5 Year Review of Equality Scheme.

##### 7.8.2 Equality and Disability Action Plans: Year 3 Progress Report – 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021

A copy of the above Report had previously been circulated for information and noting. Council Members were asked to note the Policy on Domestic Violence as one of the policies which is due for issue to Council for approval.

##### 7.8.3 NIPEC Equality Annual Progress Report 2020–2021

Council Members noted that the Annual Progress Report is due for submission to the Equality Commission NI by 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021. This falls outside of NIPEC's Council meeting timetable therefore members were asked to agree that they will receive the draft report for consideration and approval by email, in early August, in order that NIPEC can meet the ECNI



deadline. Council Members were happy to receive the Report to ensure the timeline is met.

The Equality Commission NI shall be advised that a final version will be submitted to them in September following ratification by Council at their September meeting.

#### 7.9 NIPEC Draft Business Plan 2021/22

A copy of the draft Business Plan for 2021-22 has previously been circulated to Council for approval. Ms Jackson reminded Council Members that the report was then submitted to Sponsor Branch for final approval. It was noted that the Chief Nursing Officer continues to consider the objectives to be prioritised and Council will be notified once the final plan has been approved.

#### 7.10 NIPEC Websites

At the March 2021 Council meeting, Ms Jackson had updated Council Members on the newly launched NIPEC corporate website and on developments on the Organisation's compliance with Accessibility Legislation for all three of NIPEC's websites.

Since then an incident occurred with the Online Portfolio and Careers website involving the security of these sites which are currently hosted by BSO ITS on an unsupported server. Ms Jackson informed Council Members that the 2 sites remain on the server however a newly built server has been identified for the transfer. Delay with implementing this is due to lack of capacity within the BSO ITS website support team.

BSO ITS provided assurance that there is minimum risk to the sites and that plans were in place to transfer the sites to a new server. In addition to this, there have been a number of cyber-attacks affecting HSCNI including one on Queen's University and another on the Health and Safety Executive in the Republic of Ireland. The HSCNI response to both of these is being managed by DoH, Regional HSC Cyber Security teams and HSC SIROs and Ms Jackson has represented NIPEC at regular meetings.

All of the above has been placed on NIPEC's Corporate Risk Register however, given the increasing frequency of IT and website related issues, Mrs McLernon and Ms Jackson requested that an IT/Website Internal Audit be carried out in 2021-22 to review current arrangements and make recommendations on any gaps in assurance.

The scope of the audit is to consider areas such as clarity over roles and responsibilities, security and infrastructure, and compliance with legal/good practice guidance on website management in respect of the 3 NIPEC websites. A draft report has been shared with NIPEC for consideration and Council will be kept updated on the outcome of the report and progress of recommendations.

Mrs McLernon assured Council Members that there were no Priority 1s in the draft Report and confirmed that Council Members would receive a more informative update at their meeting in September 2021.

#### 7.11 NIPEC Scoping Exercise of the NIPEC's Corporate Services' Organisational Structure

At the March 2021 meeting, Council Members were advised that as a number of the corporate team had indicated they planned to retire in 2021-22, this had presented a timely opportunity to complete a time-limited, internal scoping exercise of the current establishment and their roles within the corporate team with a view to considering the future strategic needs of the organisation.

A Report of the Internal Scoping Exercise was presented to the Chief Executive and Head of Corporate Services in May 2021 and following measured consideration of the information, it was concluded that the current organisational structure of the Corporate Services Team should be refined and developed. This would enable NIPEC to maximise the effectiveness and efficiency of the team while ensuring that the Organisation continued to meet its business needs, statutory functions and the strategic agenda set by the Department of Health.

A paper setting out a proposed structure and actions going forward had been presented to and approved by the NIPEC Senior Management Team. In line with HR advice, the paper was also shared with NIPEC Joint Negotiating Consultative Committee for comment before being shared with the Corporate Team. It was noted that there were no comments received from the JNC Committee and that Ms Jackson met with the Corporate Team on the 28<sup>th</sup> June 2021 to discuss the proposed structure. Ms Jackson agreed to keep Council Members updated with progress on the review.

#### 7.12 Update on Review of Policies

Ms Jackson reminded Council Members that they had approved a timeline for the review of 41 policies with a scheduled completion date of June 2021. Unfortunately that the timeline has slipped due to other work pressures and Ms Jackson asked Members for an agreement on an extension for completion of the remainder. Council Members were content to approve this until September 2021.

Ms Jackson gave an update to Members on progress of the Policies to date:

- **28** have been/are in the process of being approved;
- **10** are outstanding for completion of review and approval by Council;
- **2** will be incorporated into the Standing Orders (*Declaration of Interests Policy and Guidance to Staff on the Acceptance of External Gifts, Hospitality and Awards*) which will be presented at the September Council meeting; and
- **1** With Council for approval.

### 7.13 NIPEC's Business Continuity Plan along with Cover Sheet

It was noted that this had previously been circulated and was being presented for approval by Council Members.

Ms Jackson informed Council Members that the revised Plan had been approved by the NIPEC Business Team at their meeting in May 2021. There was one outstanding issue with the Plan around the decant location for NIPEC staff in the case of an emergency; this was currently provided by HSCB in their ground floor however this space was possibly being re-allocated and NIPEC was waiting for confirmation of this. Ms Jackson advised that Mrs J Hall, NIPEC's Corporate Services Manager was following this up and would update the plan accordingly.

Council Members were happy to approve the Plan in its current form but this would remain under review.

### 7.14 NIPEC Accommodation – James House Project

Ms Jackson continues to attend the monthly Project meetings for the move to James House which resumed in March 2021, with NIPEC scheduled to move to the building in June 2022.

In April 2021, the Department of Finance (DFP) issued draft Licenses to NIPEC and other potential tenants of the building. Ms Jackson met with BSO DLS Solicitors to discuss the draft and several queries arose from the meeting which were similar to those raised by other HSC ALBs. As a result and with the approval of Sponsor Branch, DLS has written formally to the Departmental solicitors on behalf of NIPEC to seek clarification on these issues, for example access to the building and opening hours on public holidays. Sponsor Branch has requested that the response be shared with them and DoH Property Management Branch.

NIPEC will be initiating an internal working group from September 2021 onwards to manage the move including the clearance of the offices in Centre House. Council Members shall be kept updated on the progress.

Professor Curran thanked Ms Jackson for her very comprehensive report.

## **8.0 SAFETY AND QUALITY**

### 8.1 NIPEC Professional Work Plan 2020/21 – Business Plan objectives progress Monitoring Report to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021.

A copy of the above Work Plan had previously been circulated. This Work Plan was to close off the year end business objectives of which there were 7 ambers objectives due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

### 8.2 NIPEC Professional Work Plan 2021/22 – Business Plan objectives progress Monitoring Report from 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021

A copy of the above Work Plan had previously been circulated. It was noted that there was 1 amber rating with the In house Education Review due to the QUB cyber security attack which had delayed work.

8.3 NIPEC Communication and Engagement Summary Report – 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021

A copy of the above Report had been circulated for information.

**9.0 CHIEF NURSING OFFICER UPDATE**

Apologies had been received from Professor C McArdle.

**10.0 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no further business.

**11.0 DATE, TIME AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next public meeting of NIPEC Council will be on 8<sup>th</sup> September 2021 at 2.00 pm in Centre House, 79 Chichester Street, Belfast, BT1 4JE.

***At this point of the meeting Mrs A McLernon, Ms J Jackson and Mrs D Meleady were asked to leave the meeting due to the confidential nature of further business.***



CHAIR

\_\_\_\_\_

Professor C Curran

DATE 08/09/21  
\_\_\_\_\_



Minutes of the Northern Ireland Practice and Education Council Meeting, held on Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021 at 11.00 am. This meeting was held via zoom.

## **12.0 CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS**

### 12.1 NIPEC Annual Recognition Awards – Update

This item was discussed with Council Members in Camera