

Minutes of the Northern Ireland Practice and Education Council Meeting, held on Wednesday, 7th September 2022 at 2.00 pm at The Mount Conference Centre Belfast

Present: Ms Bronagh Scott, Chair
Mr Kieran McCormick
Ms Karen Diamond
Ms Lisa Houlihan
Ms Brenda Kelly
Ms Emma McIlveen

In attendance: Mrs Linda Kelly, Chief Executive
Ms Jill Jackson, Head of Corporate Services
Ms Geraldine McKendry, Senior Professional Officer
Ms Eunice Strahan, Senior Professional Officer

Apologies: Mrs Catherine Rice
Ms Siobhán Caslin

Secretariat: Ms Lisa McEneaney, Business Support Manager

1.0 APOLOGIES

The Chair noted that apologies were received from Mrs Maria McIlgorm, Chief Nursing Officer, Mrs Catherine Rice and Ms Siobhán Caslin.

2.0 CHAIR'S BUSINESS

2.1 Welcome any Members of the Public

The Chair advised that no members of the public attended today's meeting.

The Chair welcomed Ms Lisa McEneaney who is the new Business Manager for NIPEC and congratulated Ms Eunice Strahan and Ms Geraldine McKendry on being appointed as Senior Professional Officers (SPO's) for NIPEC.

The Chair offered her condolences on the death of Ms Angela Reid's father and to Ms Geraldine McKendry on the death of her father.

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 Recruitment of new Council Members

The Chair outlined that NIPEC had launched the recruitment of six registrant members. Mr McCormick stated there had been keen interest in the posts. The Chair asked members to use their contacts to promote the recruitment exercise. She advised that the closing date is 16th September and that shortlisting will follow shortly after this.

2.4 Register of Council Members Activity

The Chair stressed the importance of completion of the Register of Council Members activity. She advised that the issue of remuneration is being progressed with Sponsor Branch and had been raised with the Permanent Secretary and the CNO.

2.5 Appointment of new Audit & Risk Committee Chair

The Chair explained that Ms Rice had assumed the role of Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee in March 2022 for the remainder of her Council membership, due to end in January 2023. Chair had sought a new Chair of the Committee to take over from Ms Rice and with the agreement of the Audit and Risk Committee members, Mr McCormick has been appointed Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee. The Chair advised that Ms Rice and Mr McCormick will jointly Chair the Audit and Risk Committee on 11th October and that Mr McCormick will assume the role of Chair after the October 2022 meeting. Council members endorsed this decision and offered their congratulations and thanks to Mr McCormick.

The Chair explained that there would now be a need to appoint another registrant member to the Audit and Risk Committee and she asked Ms Brenda Kelly to take on this role and she would keep this under review. Ms Brenda Kelly agreed to become a member of the Audit and Risk Committee and would attend the relevant training in due course.

ACTION: Ms Jackson to liaise with Ms Kelly to confirm a suitable date for the Audit & Risk training.

The Chair further advised that following an earlier decision of Council in March 2022, the chair of the Audit and Risk Committee would assume the role of Deputy Chair of Council. She congratulated Mr McCormick on his appointment to Deputy Chair of Council. Council members endorsed the appointment.

2.6 Update on Council Members' On Board Training

The Chair reminded members that there is a requirement for Council members to complete the On Board Training within the first six months of appointment. Ms McIlveen confirmed that she completed her training on 1st September and Ms Linda Kelly will finish her training on Friday 9th September.

The Chair gave an update on the completion of the Audit and Risk Committee training which all current members have completed.

ACTION: The Chair asked Mrs Jackson to advise the PAU after 9th September 2022 that all On Board training has been completed by new members.

2.7 Council Workshop November/December 2022

The Chair advised that as two members of Council were stepping down in December 2022, Ms Rice and Ms Houlihan, she wished to change the date of the next Council meeting from 23rd November to 7th December. She suggested a lunch be provided for Council members with the Council meeting following thereafter on 7th December.

The Chair announced that this was Ms Lisa Houlihan's last meeting of the NIPEC Council as she finishes today for maternity leave. The Chair acknowledged Ms Houlihan's commitment to NIPEC and wished her all the very best for her maternity leave.

ACTION: Ms Jackson to clarify arrangements in writing to Council members for the December Council meeting and November workshop.

2.8 Disability Champion's Network

The Chair acknowledged that Ms Diamond had now agreed to represent NIPEC on the Disability Champions Network. Ms Jackson advised that Ms Lisa McEaney also sits on the Disability Champions Network and the next meeting will be held on 13th September.

2.9 Council Members Appraisals

The Chair explained that she had completed Ms Houlihan and Ms Rice's appraisals and this was an excellent opportunity to thank them for their support to NIPEC Council.

Ms Houlihan thanked Council members and advised it had been such a privilege to sit on the NIPEC Council.

ACTION: Ms McIlveen asked that Ms Houlihan input into the Board document to provide informal practical advice for new Council members.

3.1 Minutes of the meeting held on the 6th July 2022

The Chair invited comments on the minutes of the previous Council meeting held on 6th July. She stressed the importance of the minutes being completed on a timely basis and sent to members promptly after the Council meetings. It was agreed that going forward, draft minutes should be issued to Council within 2-4 weeks of the meeting.

ACTION: Council minutes to be completed within 2-4 weeks of the meeting and sent to members along with the Action Plan.

Ms Brenda Kelly noted that on page 5, paragraph 6.1, a number of the points refer to Ms Kelly. As there are 2 members with the surname Kelly, she suggested that the minutes could clarify through use of first name initials which was being referred to.

Council members approved the minutes from 6th July subject to the above clarification.

4.1 Matters Arising

Ms Jackson gave a detailed overview and update on progress of the matters arising which were detailed in updated Action Plan circulated to Council members. Ms Brenda Kelly asked that if actions are not completed, that they remain on the Action Plan and are marked as suspended with a follow up date. Members ratified this proposal.

Regarding the action from the meeting on 6th July 2022 in relation to researching alternative options for Council members to receive papers, Ms Jackson advised that Chair, the CEX, Business Manager and herself had received a demo from a software supplier for the management of meetings. She explained that this software, Decision Time, is used by a number of other HSC organisations and appeared to offer a secure and time-efficient means of managing meetings. She confirmed that if this option was agreed in principle, the next steps included the preparation of a business case, seeking ITS agreement to host and support the software and procurement of the system.

Ms McIlveen believed that a system like this was very much needed. Ms Diamond provided positive reports of using Decision Time in her time as NISCC's Board Room apprentice. Ms Linda Kelly acknowledged that she was very impressed with the system.

The Chair asked for a timeline of how long it would take for the system to be implemented. Ms Jackson explained that the Business Case and Order form can be progressed in due course and she would aim to implement the system for the Audit and Risk Committee in February 2023; however, this would be subject to other competing demands and staff capacity. Ms Linda Kelly explained that it would be beneficial for BSO to get an HSC licence for Decision Time as there are a number of HSC Trusts and ALB's who have already adopted the Decision Time system.

ACTIONS: Ms Jackson and Ms McEneaney to prepare a business case for the purchase of Decision Time and present to NIPEC's Business Team for approval.

Ms Jackson to raise the issue of a regional framework at the ALB Corporate Forum and with BSO customer care representatives.

Subject to the business case being approved and BSO ITS granting permission for the software to be housed on the network, a demo to be provided to Council Members on Decision Time.

The Chair thanked Ms McEneaney and Ms Jackson for the progression of this work.

5.1 CORRESPONDENCE

The Chair gave an update on correspondence received since the last Council meeting.

- Letter dated 14th July 2022 from Robin Swann, MLA, Minister for Health to Chairs' Forum regarding Rebuilding HSC Services;

- Correspondence from DoH Governance Unit re NIAO Good Practice Guide – Board Effectiveness (June 2022);
- Invite to Council Members to attend Cyber Security Training received 18th July 2022
- Letter dated 8th August 2022 from Robin Swann, MLA, Minister for Health to DOH ALB Chairs regarding Rebuilding HSC Services;
- Letter from Disability Network inviting representation from NIPEC Council Member;

Council members did not raise any questions and noted the correspondence.

6.0 OPERATIONAL PERFORMANCE AND SERVICE IMPROVEMENT

Chief Executives Report

Ms Linda Kelly gave a comprehensive update on her Chief Executives Report. She explained that she is focusing particularly in her first six months on building relationships with sponsor branch and with NIPEC's stakeholders.

The Chair asked would NIPEC replace the two Professional Officer posts. Ms Linda Kelly said that she would like to appoint Senior Professional Officers if she can source the additional funding for these posts.

Ms McIlveen commended the Chief Executives report and advised that she found the report very informative. It would be helpful to include the key priorities and what is topical at the moment.

ACTION: Ms Kelly to add priorities for NIPEC and the regional priorities for nursing and midwifery to the Chief Executives Report.

Council members noted the Chief Executives Report.

6.2 A copy of the Consultation Activity Report

Ms Linda Kelly advised Council members that NIPEC had not had any further consultations from the last Council meeting.

Council members noted the Consultation Activity Report.

7.0 CORPORATE CONTROL & FINANCE

7.1 Report from Standing Committee:

7.1.1 Unconfirmed Minutes of the A&R Meeting held on the 6th July 2022

In Mrs Rice's absence, Ms Jackson presented the unconfirmed Minutes of the A&R Meeting held on the 6th July 2022. She advised that these minutes will be formally presented to the next Audit and Risk Committee on 11th October. She noted that Ms Rice, who chaired the meeting, had reviewed the minutes and was content with these.

Council members noted the unconfirmed Minutes of the A&R Meeting held on the 6th July 2022 and that they would be formally presented to the Audit and Risk Committee on 11 October 2022.

7.2 Finance

7.2.1 Financial Summary of Expenditure, Month 4

Ms Jackson provided Council members with an update in relation to the UK wide cybersecurity incident and that to prevent HSC systems being affected, eProcurement and FPM had been stood down by BSO ITS. Ms Jackson confirmed that both systems are both currently up and running and that NIPEC had not been significantly affected by the outage.

Ms Jackson advised that at month 4, NIPEC had been projecting a yearend surplus of £224,000. She confirmed that this was after further fixed term posts had been included in the budget projections. Given there were savings from the move from Centre House and pending the occupation of James House in February 2023, NIPEC had offered a retraction of £103,000 to DoH which had been accepted. Ms Jackson explained that the savings were from rental costs for the period September 2022 to March 2023, and car parking, rates and service charges between September and the end of January 2023. Ms Jackson added that with the retraction of £103,000 NIPEC were still showing a projected yearend surplus of £112,000 and that she anticipated that NIPEC may request further retraction of funds at Mid-Year reporting.

The Chair asked were the monies being returned recurrently. Ms Jackson advised that this was not the case, these savings were non-recurrent and had only arisen due to circumstances in relation to accommodation in this financial year.

The Chair stressed the importance of closely monitoring the financial position throughout the year.

7.2.2 Letter to Accounting Officers re Financial Management During Covid Recovery/Rebuild

Council members noted the Letter to Accounting Officers re Financial Management during Covid recovery/Rebuild.

7.3 Corporate Risk Register 2022-23, Version 4

Ms Jackson provided Council members with an update on the Corporate Risk Register. She advised that in relation to risks 2 & 3 (the turnover of staff and Council member's), progress is being made but these risks both remain high. Members agreed this approach.

In relation to risks 5 & 6, Ms Jackson informed members that she and Ms McEneaney were attending a workshop on 23rd September which will be attended by all ALB's in relation to agreeing a common approach to the management of Cyber Security attacks. The outcomes of this workshop will be reflected into NIPEC's Business Continuity Plan and be presented to the December Council meeting.

The Chair asked about the workshop in relation to the Corporate Risk Register. Ms Jackson advised that the plan was to hold the workshop in 2023. Ms Jackson acknowledged that there are two Internal Audit recommendations which are due for implementation in December 2022. She asked Council if they would consider a new draft template at the December Council meeting which would include risk appetite and controls/assurances; this would allow the 2 audit recommendations to be signed off. Members agreed this approach.

ACTION: Ms Jackson and Ms McEneaney to amend the template which was circulated in November 2021 and present to Council meeting in December 2022.

ACTION: Council Risk workshop to be scheduled for 2023.

Council members noted the Corporate Risk Register 2022-23, Version 4.

7.4 KPIs 2022 - 23

Ms Jackson presented the KPI's 2022-23. She highlighted that absence was concerning however this was skewed due to the small numbers of staff in NIPEC and that she expected this to reduce significantly in the coming months due to the return to work of the affected staff. Ms Jackson also confirmed that all appraisals had been completed.

Council members noted KPIs 2022-23.

7.5 NIPEC Accommodation

Ms Jackson gave a comprehensive update in relation to NIPEC's move from Centre House. She confirmed that NIPEC had formally exited the lease on Wednesday 31st August 2022 and the issue of dilapidation costs would now be taken forward by the Surveyors. Once a final figure had been agreed, a Deed of Surrender would be prepared by NIPEC Solicitor for the Chief Executive to sign off.

Ms Jackson advised that a revised date for the move into James House was 6th February 2023. On the afternoon of 30th September, Mrs L Kelly and Ms Jackson would be visiting the accommodation.

The Chair acknowledged and commended the work that had been undertaken by Ms Jackson and Ms Mills in relation to the move to James House.

Council members noted the NIPEC accommodation update.

7.6 Equality

7.6.1 Equality Annual Progress Report 2021-22

Ms Jackson presented the Equality Annual Progress Report 2021-22. She advised that it had been submitted in draft to the Equality Commission on 31st August and asked members if they were happy to ratify the report.

Discussion took place between Council members in relation to the template of the report and it being fit for purpose. It was agreed that the format of the report was not easy to read and members suggested that feedback be provided to the Equality Commission on changing the format.

ACTION: Ms Jackson to have a discussion with BSO Equality colleagues in relation to providing the Equality Commission with feedback on the Annual Progress Report template.

Ms McIlveen discussed the statistics of those staff declaring a disability on HRPTS and that these may not be reflective of the overall staff in NIPEC. Ms Jackson advised that reminders had previously been issued to staff encouraging them to record all information on HRPTS however there may be reluctance of staff to declare all information, including disability, as given the small numbers of employees in NIPEC, staff may feel they could be easily identified. Ms McIlveen acknowledged that staff who may have a disability may not be getting the adequate support that they may need.

Council members approved the Equality Annual Progress Report 2021-22.

7.6.2 Equality and Disability 5 Year Action Plans 2023-28

Ms Jackson advised Council members that there had been a six-month extension to the Equality and Disability 5 Year Action Plans 2023-28. Ms Jackson confirmed that the revised Equality and Disability Action Plans 2023-28 now have to be with the ECNI by 1st October 2023.

ACTION: Draft Equality and Disability 5 Year Action Plans 2023-28 to be presented to Council at the March 2023 meeting before issue for consultation.

Council members noted the update to timescales for the Equality and Disability 5 Year Action Plans 2023-28.

7.7 Standing Orders

Ms Jackson presented the draft Standing Orders for approval. Ms Jackson explained that the Standing Orders had been radically reviewed last year (2021) to bring them in line with other HSC organisations. The version presented to Council today had been updated to reflect the circular DoH Circular HSC(F) 31-2021 (DAO (DoF) 07/21): Guidance on Conflicts of Interest. Ms Jackson recommended that Council approve this version until the new Partnership Agreement was drafted and then any changes reflected in that would be included in the Standing Orders and reviewed again by Council in March 2023.

ACTIONS: Ms McIlveen asked that under section 6.1.1 were it mentions polices if these could be specifically listed within this section.

Ms Jackson to amend the Standing Orders and circulate to Council members and staff.

Council members approved the Standing Orders to reflect the circular DoH Circular HSC(F) 31-2021 (DAO (DoF) 07/21): Guidance on Conflicts of Interest.

Ms Jackson advised that she had developed a cover sheet for papers being presented to Council as requested by Chair. She informed members that it had been approved by BTM and agreed that it would be trialled at today's meeting and asked members for their feedback in relation to the coversheet.

ACTIONS: Council members agreed the use of the coversheet. The Chair asked that the coversheet be completed for every paper presented to Council and it should be used going forward.

Ms Jackson to circulate the coversheet to NIPEC's senior team for use going forward.

7.8 Online Portfolio: Disposal or Retention of Records

Ms Jackson gave a detailed overview of the Online Portfolio paper: Disposal or Retention of Records paper. She explained that based on the information provided, Council are being asked to consider whether NIPEC should retain or dispose of the personal data held relating to the Online Portfolio.

The Senior Team have considered the issue and the advice from the DPO, and would recommend that subject to targeted communication to users advising them of the erasure date, that the data should be kept until March 2023 and then deleted.

Subject to the agreement of Council to the recommendation above, NIPEC will use our communication channels to inform users via social media, websites and circulation lists.

ACTIONS: Council members suggested an approach to NMC to request access to their communication media platforms advising registrants that the data will be deleted in March 2023.

Ms Jackson to obtain legal advice and provide an update to Council members at the next meeting in December.

Council members approved the approach to disposing of records on the Online Portfolio: Disposal or Retention of Records paper.

8.0 SAFETY AND QUALITY

8.1 NIPEC Professional Work Plan 2022-23 – Business Plan objectives progress Monitoring Report from 1st April to 31st August 2022

Ms Linda Kelly gave a detailed update on the NIPEC Professional Work Plan 2022-23.

Council members noted the NIPEC Professional Work Plan 2022-23 Business Plan objectives progress Monitoring Report from 1st April to 31st August 2022.

8.2 DoH Covid-19 Public Inquiry Group

Ms Jackson provided a verbal update on the DoH Covid -19 Public Inquiry Group following her first meeting representing NIPEC on this Group.

ACTIONS: The Chair asked that the DoH Covid-19 Public Inquiry Group is a standing agenda item on the Council agenda.

Ms Jackson to share the papers of the DoH Covid-19 Public Inquiry Group with Council members.

Council members noted the DoH Covid-19 Public Inquiry Group update.

9.0 CHIEF NURSING OFFICER UPDATE

The Chair advised that unfortunately there had not been a Chief Nursing Officer Update provided for today's Council meeting. Ms Linda Kelly provided Council members with an update:

- Ms Kelly gave an update on visiting in hospitals and care homes since the relaxation of Covid-19 restrictions;
- Nursing and Midwifery Strategy –have had their first meeting;
- Professional Alert Policy –this Policy will be stood down;
- Enhancing Critical Care Framework-learning from Covid which will be completed by March 2023;

- Chief Nursing Officer has been very visible in Maternity Services-showing her support in visiting Maternity hospitals;
- Report on Non-Nursing Midwifery Duties-Housekeeping roles.

DATE, TIME AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 7th December, venue TBC.