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**Northern Ireland Social Care Council
Registrants' Committee
Confirmed Minutes**

**01 December 2009 at 10.30am
In Millennium House, Belfast**

Present

Brian Smyth (Chair) (NIPSA)	Damien Maguire (NIPSA)
Ricky Allen (Student Representative)	Sam Murphy (NIPSA)
Damien Campbell (UNISON)	

Apologies

Sharon Woods (Deputy Chair) (Unison)	Geraldine Mullan (NIPSA)
Janette Ferguson (UNISON)	Ciaran Traynor (BASW)

In Attendance

Patricia Higgins (Director of Registration)	Andre McKeown (Communications Officer)
Peggy Carlile (Secretary/Administrator) (Note Taker)	

Action

(1) Welcome and Apologies

1.1 The Chair noted apologies from Sharon Woods, Geraldine Mullan, and Ciaran Traynor.

(2) Chair's Business

2.1 The Chair advised that he was aware that Committee Members were having difficulties in being able to attend meetings. This would be discussed at Item 7.

(3) Minutes of Previous Meeting held on 27 October 2009

3.1 The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as an accurate record.

(4) Matters Arising

- 4.1 Item 4.2 – Assessed Year in Employment – The Director of Registration noted that the issue in relation to agency staff has been raised with the DHSSPS. She advised that as the DHSSPS Circular in relation to supervision of AYE is different from the proposed change, the DHSSPS is seeking to liaise with RIT in relation to this matter. It was agreed that the Chair and Damien Maguire would raise the issue of the guidance with their colleagues on the RIT Group. It is hoped that the new NISCC guidance will be issued in May. The Director of Registration also advised the Committee that she has been meeting with each of the Directors of Social Work of the Trusts in turn and that the proposed revisions to the AYE standards have been discussed with them.

**Chair/
D Maguire**

The Committee discussed the “Advice for AYE” page on the website, and it was agreed that further work on this would be put on hold until the new guidance is issued.

- 4.2 Item 4.3 – Roles and Boundaries of Council, Committee, Trade Unions and BASW – The Chair advised that this meeting had been very useful. He felt that it had clarified the roles and boundaries of the NISCC, and what it was and was not. The Director of Registration stated that she felt the meeting had been beneficial and she agreed to circulate the notes taken at the meeting.

**Director of
Registration**

The Committee discussed concerns over the role of the NISCC as a “Champion of Social Work”. The Director of Registration felt that the NISCC can be a champion within its statutory remit, however there was a need to work with Trade Unions and BASW to coordinate the promotion of social work and social care work. The Committee agreed that the work of the NISCC on training and standards also needed promotion.

Ricky Allen agreed to speak with the other student coordinators to disseminate information. The Committee agreed to support the development of social work students and discussed how this could be accomplished.

- 4.3 Item 8.1 – DHSSPS Consultation on Compulsion – The Director of Registration advised the Committee that has not yet met with the DHSSPS to discuss the results of the consultation.

- 4.4 Item 10.2 – Codes of Practice – The Director of Registration advised that there was a meeting held recently in London to discuss the Codes of Practice for Employers. Cecil Worthington (NHSCT), Jim McCall (Four Seasons) and Jo Marley (Bryson Charitable Group) attended as NI employer representatives. The consensus of those attending was that the Codes of Practice for Employers was valuable however they could be tightened up. It was the view of the NI

employers that the Codes should be statutory. The Director of Registration will report on any further developments to the Committee at the next meeting.

4.5 CHRE – The Director of Registration noted that Colleen Stirling was carrying out a piece of work benchmarking the functions of the NISCC against the CHRE Standards. She advised that a Conduct Officer has been brought in to cover her position whilst this work is being carried out.

4.6 NISCC Activities – It was suggested that a breakdown of NISCC activities, such as working groups and sub groups, would be beneficial for the Committee. The Director of Registration agreed to draft a paper listing the activities for Registration, Education and Training and Communications.

(5) Codes of Practice Promotional Strategy

5.1 The Communications Officer introduced the paper and went through it for the Committee. She advised that there had been a last minute surge of responses to the Codes of Practice survey. She also handed out copies of a Codes of Practice pack which the Care Council of Wales has developed.

5.2 The Committee discussed the strategy and suggested the following:-

- An approach is made to the Trusts to seek the addition of a professional bodies section to their intranet.
- An approach is made to the Universities to seek the addition of a link to the NISCC to social work students' personal homepages.
- Link from the Registrants' Committee webpage to the Codes of Practice.
- Adapt the CCW Codes of Practice pack for NISCC use, if given permission.
- Include flyers, bookmarks or calendars in Trade Union magazines.

5.3 The Director of Registration advised that work is ongoing to link the Codes of Practice for Employers with the RQIA's regulations and should be completed by the end of December.

5.4 The Committee endorsed the strategy and thanked the Communications Officer for her hard work. The Communications Officer advised that the strategy would be going to the Registration and Regulation of the Workforce Committee on 9 December.

(6) NISCC Registrants' Roadshow – 19 January 2010 – Agenda

6.1 The Director of Registration went through the flyer and notes for the Committee. She advised that venues were being considered in Omagh and Derry and will be confirmed as soon as possible. She

stated that there had been a good discussion on the structure of the day with Damien Campbell and Geraldine Mullan, and that Council were content with the proposal.

6.2 The Committee discussed the programme and notes. It was suggested that 'all' be added to 'the Western Trust area'. It was agreed that NIPSA would also distribute the flyer with their bulletin. The following changes were agreed to questions 2 and 3:-

Chair

- Question 2 – “How might group members use the Codes to Protect themselves?”
- Question 3 – “How could employers promote the Codes effectively?”

6.3 It was agreed that facilitators should bring examples of good practice with them to the roadshow. It was also agreed that copies of the Codes of Practice would be brought for use during the group exercises.

6.4 The Committee agreed the following members would help to facilitate the discussions:-

- Damien Campbell
- Sam Murphy
- Ricky Allen
- Damien Maguire
- Geraldine Mullan (the Chair to contact her to see if she is available)

It was also agreed to have a possible student group if there were enough numbers.

6.5 A briefing meeting with the Members listed above will be held after the closing date of 8 January.

6.6 Committee Members were asked to feed scenarios, ideas and issues to Peggy for the January meeting.

(7) Review of the Registrants' Committee after First Year of Operation

7.1 The Director of Registration advised that as per the Terms of Reference, a review should be held after the first year of the Committee's operation. She noted that the Chief Executive and Council Chair will attend the next meeting to discuss the operation of the Committee. Members agreed that this would be valuable.

7.2 The Chair requested that Committee Members reflect on how the year has gone in preparation for the meeting.

(8) Any Other Business

- 8.1 The Director of Registration advised the Committee that the Social Work Task Force published their final report today with recommendations for England. She stated that it would be important to read, as there could be implications for Northern Ireland, such as the recommendation to establish a National College of Social Work. It was agreed that this would be added to the agenda for the next meeting.

(9) Date and Time of Next Meeting

- 9.1 The Committee agreed that the next meeting would take place on Monday 25 January 2010 at 10.30am, in Millennium House.

Brian Smyth, Chair of Registrants' Committee
Northern Ireland Social Care Council