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

**07 April 2009 at 10.30am
In Millennium House, Belfast**

Present

Brian Smyth (Chair) (NIPSA)
Damien Campbell (UNISON)
Eithne Darragh (BASW)
Damien Maguire (NIPSA)
Sam Murphy (NIPSA)

Sharon Woods (Deputy Chair) (UNISON)
Frank Carter (Student Representative)
Janette Ferguson (UNISON)
Geraldine Mullan (NIPSA)

Apologies

Paul O'Donnell (UNISON)

In Attendance

Patricia Higgins (Director of Registration)

Peggy Carlile (Secretary/Administrator)
(Note Taker)

Action

(1) Welcome and Apologies

1.1 The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted an apology from Paul O'Donnell.

(2) Minutes of Previous Meeting held on 04 March 2009

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

(3) Matters Arising

3.1 Joint Council/Registrants' Committee Meetings – The Director of Registration reported that the next joint meeting will be held on 23 June. She will discuss this with the Chair and report back to the next meeting.

3.2 Workstreams/Subgroups – The Director of Registration noted that no groups were ongoing at the moment. However, the Workforce Development Committee will be reviewing its membership and may seek representation from the Registrants’ Committee. The Chair requested that Committee Members note this, and that additional time would be needed to cover this commitment.

(4) Promotion of the Codes of Practice

4.1 The Director of Registration presented a paper in which she outlined the findings from a recent review of the use of the Codes of Practice. The review had been carried out by Kings College Research Unit on behalf of the four Social Care Councils. The review highlighted the need for the Councils to carry out further promotional work on the Codes of Practice – both among registrants and service users and carers. The four Social Care Councils have agreed that promotional activity would be carried out locally by each Council.

4.2 At the previous meeting, the Registrants’ Committee had raised concerns about the lack of knowledge of the Codes of Practice among registrants. The Director of Registration asked members to consider how the NISCC might further promote the Codes of Practice.

4.3 The Committee discussed the following ways of promotion:-

- Roadshows;
- Interaction with Careers Officers for school leavers;
- Scenarios of breaches of the Codes of Practice to assist social care workers to link professional issues with the Codes;
- Learning from Conduct Hearings;
- Disseminate information via payslips;
- One to one sessions during induction regarding the Codes of Practice;
- Posters;
- DVDs;
- Cascading information from Council Members, Committee Members, employers and student organisations – documents to be used in induction and training;
- Use of social work and social care forums.

4.4 The Committee also noted the recommendations of the Laming Report, particularly the recommendations that the Employers’ Code of Practice should be made a statutory requirement. The Director of Registration confirmed that the Council would be discussing the recommendations of the Laming Report.

4.5 It was agreed that a working group consisting of the Director of Registration, Frank Carter, Sam Murphy and Sharon Woods would meet on 11 May at 12.00pm to identify the key elements of a promotional strategy. The Director of Registration stated that any

promotional strategy will have to be endorsed by the Council. The Director of Registration will report to the Registration and Regulation of the Workforce Committee and Council on the work which the Registrants' Committee is undertaking.

Director of
Registration

(5) Assessed Year in Employment

5.1 Further to the discussions about the AYE at the last meeting, the Director of Registration tabled a draft questionnaire which the Council is proposing to send to AYE registrants. The Committee was asked to advise on the questionnaire and suggest changes and additions.

5.2 The Committee suggested the following changes:-

- Add an additional question regarding the nature of their caseload, e.g. describe caseload/workload and please provide a breakdown.
- Take out 'fieldwork' in question 3.
- Add a 'Don't know' option to question 3.
- Add "Do you feel your caseload/workload should be less and why" to question 3.
- Remove SCR number request from questionnaire.
- In relation to induction – policies and procedures – replace this with "Do you have a copy of the NISCC Guidance on AYE? Yes/No. If not, why?"
- Suggest asking how long individual has been undertaking the AYE.

5.3 The Chair suggested that the letter to AYE registrants could be jointly signed by the Director of Registration and him, to encourage registrants to return the questionnaire. The Director of Registration stated that she would discuss this suggestion with the Chief Executive.

5.4 The Director of Registration will report to the Registration and Regulation of the Workforce Committee on the AYE Questionnaire and advise them of the issues raised and the proposal to issue a questionnaire.

Director of
Registration

5.5 Members agreed that they would encourage responses through their own organisations.

(6) Roadshows

6.1 The Director of Registration noted that the Council would like to hold a roadshow on the afternoon of 7 July in the Canal Court Hotel, Newry, for Southern Trust area registrants. Committee Members were requested to hold this date in their diaries. This item was noted as an agenda item for discussion at the next meeting.

(7) Communication with Students

- 7.1 Frank Carter suggested that a member of the Registrants' Committee meet with first year social work students in September, to discuss the work of the Committee and its use as a line of communication with the Council. The Director of Registration noted that this could be done in conjunction with meetings the NISCC holds with social work students at that time in relation to registration. She will invite Alison Kavanagh, Professional Adviser, to attend the Registrants' Committee in August.

Director of
Registration

(8) Any Other Business

- 8.1 Eithne Darragh noted that she will continue as a Registrants' Committee Member until June, at which time another BASW member would be taking her place.
- 8.2 Frank Carter noted that he would be graduating from university in July, and a new student representative will need to be identified.
- 8.3 The Director of Registration noted that interviews would be held for Conduct and Registration Committee Members in May. She requested the participation of a Registrants' Committee Member. It was agreed that Damien Maguire would assist with interviews.
- 8.4 The Director of Registration raised the issue of holding the Registrants' Committee in other venues, as she was mindful that a number of Committee Members had to travel quite a distance to Belfast. It was agreed that the Committee would discuss this at the next meeting.

(9) Date of Next Meeting

- 9.1 The next meeting will be 13 May 2009 at 10.30am.

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