



Northern Ireland Social Care Council
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**Northern Ireland Social Care Council
Joint Council/Registrants' Committee Meeting
Minutes**

**20 January 2009 at 2.00pm
In Millennium House, Belfast**

Present

Council

Dr Jeremy Harbison (Council Chair)
Julie Erskine (Council Member)
Jim Perry (Council Member)
Miriam Karp (Council Member)

Gillian McGaughey (Council Member)
Glenn Houston (Council Member)
Maire McMahon (Council Member)

Registrants' Committee

Brian Smyth (Committee Chair) (NIPSA)
Janette Ferguson (UNISON)
Geraldine Mullan (NIPSA)
Damien Campbell (UNISON)
Sam Murphy (NIPSA)

Eithne Darragh (BASW)
Damien Maguire (NIPSA)
Paul O'Donnell (UNISON)
Sharon Woods (Deputy Chair) (UNISON)
Frank Carter (Student Representative)

In Attendance

Brendan Johnston (Chief Executive)
Lorraine Simmons (Dir of Educ & Trng)
Alison Kavanagh (Professional Adviser)
Paul Kearney (Professional Adviser)
Jan Houston (Professional Adviser)
Denise Rooney (Conduct Officer)
Siobhan Craig (PA to Chair & Chief Executive)

Patricia Higgins (Director of Registration)
Mark Bradley (Director of Corporate Services)
Colleen Stirling (Professional Adviser)
Gerardine Cunningham (Professional Adviser)
André McKeown (Communications Officer)
Mairead Harkin (Information Officer)

(1)	Welcome and Introductions
1.1	The Council Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Introductions were given by all present.
1.2	Apologies were noted from the following Members: Geraldine Campbell, Eleanor Taggart, Trevor Spratt, Brendan McKeever and Joe Blake.
1.3	The Council Chair described the Committee structure and gave a brief background to the establishment of the Committee. He indicated that a growing number of registrants were now on the register and with the arrival of the new Council in October 2007, it was recognised that better lines of communication were necessary.
1.4	The need for a group/forum of registrants was discussed. The Chair made reference to the re-registration process last year which had brought about issues; this led to further discussions taking place between NISCC, Unions and the DHSSPS, resulting in the DHSSPS issuing a direction to NISCC to establish a Registrants' Committee. The first meeting of the Registrants' Committee took place in November 2008.
2	Hopes and Expectations
2.1	The Chair indicated that Council is keen to seek registrants' views on issues regarding the statutory responsibilities of NISCC. The Council also hopes that the Registrants' Committee will act as a critical mechanism for the Council to raise its profile with registrants.
2.2	Council hopes to engage the Registrants' Committee with the work of NISCC and to share its knowledge on the views of registrants. There is also the possibility of running sessions across the five Trust areas for registrants to participate in general discussions on relevant issues. This would aid the two way flow of information.
2.3	The Committee Chair stated that the Committee was keen to discuss the issues facing registrants. He noted that the aspirations of the Committee mirror those of Council. He noted that there was good representation on the Committee from NIPSA, BASW and the Universities.
2.4	The Council Chair stated that the Council Agenda will, from now on, include the Registrants' Committee as a standing agenda item, and that a written or oral report should be submitted. There would also be twice yearly formal sessions with Council.
3	Looking Ahead
3.1	Council Members felt that it was important that Members of the Registrants' Committee be brought up to speed with the current status of the Roles and Tasks Project. In addition, it was felt that it was important to engage with the University of Ulster and Queen's University.

3.2	The Chief Executive indicated that it was important that the Registrants' Committee has visibility and that this could be created through province-wide events. He stated that NISCC needs to share its workplan with the Committee, for example, the Practice Learning Strategy, the roll out of registration and developing and enhancing guidance such as Standards of Supervision in Child Care (RIT). The Committee Chair stated that AYE was a major issue.
3.3	Discussion took place around the relationship between NISCC and RQIA, with Members recognising Council's statutory responsibilities. It was noted that the scrutiny placed around social work has never been more acute than in today's environment.
3.4	The Director of Training noted that information sharing between the NISCC and the Registrants' Committee would be useful, as in the past information such as, what's happening in the workforce and what's evidence based, has been hard to achieve.
3.5	The Council Chair summarised by indicating that Northern Ireland is leading the way by establishing a Registrants' Committee with other Social Care Councils viewing us as a model. The Council Chair thanked Members for putting themselves forward for Committee membership.

Dr Jeremy Harbison
Chair
Northern Ireland Social Care Council