



Northern Ireland Social Care Council

**Corporate Plan 2009 – 2012
FINAL - April 2009**

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Northern Ireland Social Care Council

Who we are

Northern Ireland Social Care Council is a non-departmental public body, established under the Health & Personal Social Services Act (NI) 2001 as part of a UK-wide drive to raise standards in social care. NISCC is sponsored by the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (NI). We are tasked with raising the quality of social care practice through workforce education and training; to put in place better safeguards for the protection of people using social care services and to increase public confidence in the workforce. Similar Councils have been established in England, Scotland and Wales.

The establishment of the NISCC to regulate and support the professionalism of the workforce was a ground-breaking development for social care. For the first time, the professional status and the commitment of the workforce in providing high quality services, often in difficult circumstances, is being publicly recognised. There are approximately 35,000 social care workers in Northern Ireland, all of whom will be registered with the NISCC over the next few years.

NISCC regulates the standards of training for social workers at qualifying and post-qualifying level to ensure that social workers can develop the skills they need to provide quality services in often complex and difficult situations.

In collaboration with our partner organisations in Skills for Care and Development, NISCC promotes and develops training and occupational standards across the social care and children and young peoples' workforce. We lead a network of key employers, education interests, government agencies, service users, carers and stakeholders to identify and address skills needs for the sector to help build a competent and confident workforce. Induction Standards for social care workers have already been developed and implemented in Northern Ireland and work is progressing on the development of a Credit and Qualification Framework for the sector. We will continue to work with stakeholders to develop the skilled workforce needed to provide quality social care services in the future.

Our Purpose

The NISCC exists to protect the public, specifically those who use social care services, and to promote confidence and competence in the social care workforce. We do this by registering and regulating the social care workforce, setting and monitoring the standards for professional social work training and promoting training within the broader social care workforce.

Our Vision

We will protect the public by promoting and supporting confidence, competence and credibility in the social care workforce.

Our Principles

- **Enabling, Supporting and Valuing**

Enabling, supporting and valuing Council Members, staff, service users and carers to maximise their contribution to the work of the NISCC.

- **Inclusive Leadership**

Working with the social care workforce, service users, carers and other stakeholders in a spirit of constructive partnership.

- **Service User and Carer Involvement**

Ensuring service users and carers influence the development and work of the NISCC.

- **Equity and Fairness**

Supporting equality of opportunity and valuing diversity.

- **Committed to Excellence**

Seeking continually to improve what we do and how we do it.

What We Aim To Achieve

The overall aim of the NISCC is:

To protect the public through improving safeguards for vulnerable people, raising the standards of social care practice and strengthening the professionalism of the workforce.

The establishment of the NISCC is central to the government's quality agenda of raising standards within social care. To deliver on the quality agenda for the workforce, the Council will support and promote:

- A confident and valued Social Care workforce
- Better understanding of Social Care among the public
- Improved public confidence
- High standards of Social Care practice
- High standards of education and training
- Sufficient numbers of appropriately trained and skilled Social Care workers

To protect the public effectively we need to focus on three themes:

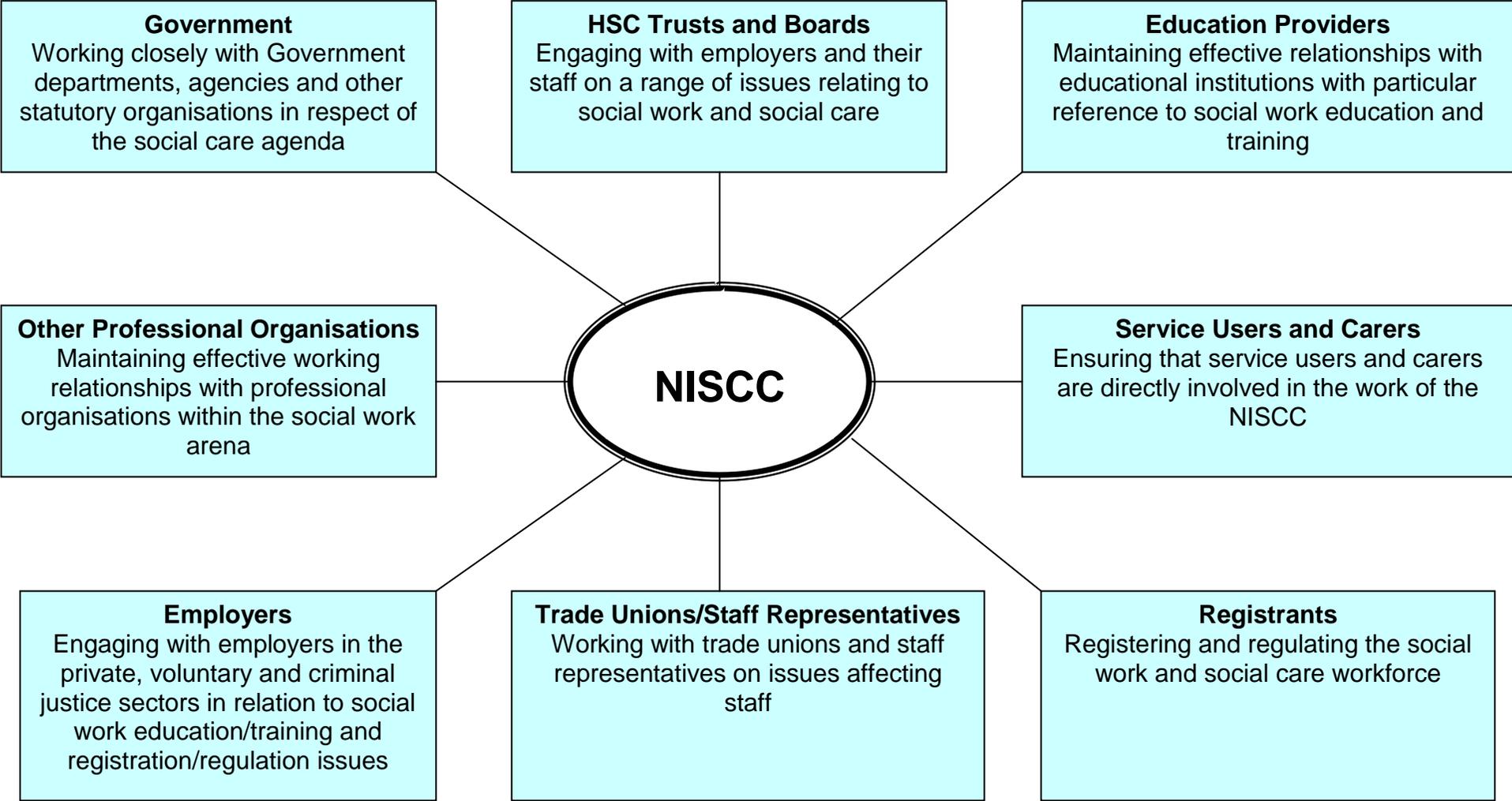
1. Confidence:
 - a. That those registered with the NISCC are safe and competent to practice;
 - b. That those registered with the NISCC who have committed misconduct will be dealt with effectively and that the public will be protected from any risk that they pose.
2. Competence:
 - a. That social care workers are properly trained for the work that they do;
 - b. That social care training is based on best practice and evidence based methods;
 - c. That social care workers continually update their knowledge and skills through regular post registration training and learning.
3. Credibility
 - a. That the Council operates in such a way that it protects the public effectively, while recognising the rights of registrants to be treated fairly;
 - b. That social care workers make a valuable contribution to society;
 - c. That social care is a worthwhile and rewarding career.

This means that the Council must engage with a range of key stakeholders in social care, in particular service users. The Corporate Plan provides a framework of six strategic objectives which give an overview of the Council's work over the next three years.

What Our Stakeholders Can Expect from Us

For:	We will provide:
Service users, carers and the public	<p>Safeguards to promote best practice.</p> <p>Opportunities to inform and shape the work of the NISCC at all stages.</p>
Registrants	<p>Clear standards to underpin professional practice.</p> <p>Independent and fair regulation.</p> <p>Opportunities to inform the work of NISCC.</p>
Commissioning and provider organisations	<p>A framework to promote consistency in standards of conduct and practice throughout the PSS sector.</p>
Government	<p>A regulatory system for social work training.</p> <p>Registration and regulation of the social care workforce.</p>

NISCC's Engagement with its Stakeholders



Strategic Context

The Changing Environment

There are a number of important changes occurring within the wider external environment which will have significant implications for the NISCC. These include:

Review of Public Administration

The organisational re-structuring within the Health and Social Services Sector is well underway following the Government's 'Review of Public Administration' (RPA).

The Review recognised the importance of the functions of the NISCC in terms of regulation and acting as an independent professional lead organisation for the social care workforce.

The major changes within the Trust structures, following the establishment of the five new Health and Social Care Trusts within Northern Ireland, presents opportunities for improving communications with them as key NISCC stakeholders.

The implications of Personal and Public Involvement (PPI) on the field of health and social care (DHSSPSNI Guidance - September 2007) also creates change and possibilities for a more systematic approach to User Involvement, a core value of the NISCC.

The NISCC will continue to maintain its key role in setting standards for and ensuring the quality of the education, training and practice of social workers¹ and social care workers². It will also work in close co-operation with the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority (RQIA) and the Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) to maintain and improve the quality of social care for all the citizens within Northern Ireland in addition to any new or restructured agencies such as the Health and Social Care Board, Business Service Organisation, Agency for Public Health and Social Wellbeing and the Patient Client Council.

Education, Training and Skills

The PSS Development and Training Strategy sets out the Government policy for workforce development in the social care workforce up until the year 2016. This strategy constitutes a vital component of the overall strategic framework within which the NISCC will conduct its business throughout the period of this Corporate Plan.

¹ Social Workers are professionally qualified to assess the needs of individuals, families and communities and plan the individual packages of care and support that are best suited to help them.

² Social Care Workers provide personal care to service users in a range of settings, including residential care, day care and domiciliary care.

Key amongst the recommendations and targets within the PSS Development and Training Strategy are the links between training, qualifications and ongoing registration. The strategy establishes the key areas around which workforce development initiatives will be focused and presents an exciting and challenging agenda for the NISCC over the period of this plan.

As the Northern Ireland partner of Skills for Care and Development, the NISCC is responsible for leading on the skills agenda for the Social Care and Children's Workforce. The NISCC will continue to provide leadership. It will liaise with the appropriate Government Departments, including the Department of Education in relation to the Children's workforce, regarding the implementation of the Sector Skills Agreement which sets out the framework for the education and training of the workforce over the years ahead.

Professional Education and Training

The NISCC has a responsibility to regulate professional social work education and training at qualifying and post qualifying levels. The NISCC will evaluate the benefits of these in terms of fitness for purpose and value for money.

There have been recent changes regarding the organisational arrangements for the Northern Ireland Post Qualifying Education and Training Partnership (NIPQETP). From 1st April 2009, the staff of NIPQETP will transfer to the Council. There will be further discussion with the Partnership and key stakeholders about the future structures for the Partnership.

The NISCC has a responsibility to promote ongoing professional development for social work and social care staff. During this Corporate Plan, work will continue in agreeing and implementing an appropriate 'fitness to practise' framework linked to post-registration training and learning requirements.

Registration and Regulation

Registration is the critical building block that enables the NISCC to work towards increasing the status of social care, improving standards of practice and, where necessary, taking action against misconduct. Over the period of the Corporate Plan, the NISCC will continue rolling out registration to all social care workers.

The NISCC has a statutory responsibility to regulate the social care workforce. This requires the NISCC to investigate complaints about alleged misconduct by registrants and to take action where misconduct is proven.

A key theme for the NISCC during this Corporate Plan will be to improve the engagement of registrants in the business of the Council, particularly through the establishment of a Registrants' Committee. The NISCC will seek to put in place mechanisms to ensure that registrants have the opportunity to engage effectively in the work of the NISCC.

Other key themes will be the introduction of compulsory registration for social care workers, linking registration more closely to accredited training and learning, and

ensuring that sufficient resources are available to discharge the NISCC's statutory functions effectively.

Service Users and Carers

A core principle of the NISCC is working in partnership with service users and carers. This is reflected in the Council's basic structure and in the way it conducts its business.

During the course of this Corporate Plan, the Council will establish new arrangements for User and Carer Participation in light of the findings emanating from an independent user involvement consultation jointly with SCIE and RQIA and published in early 2008. In particular the Council will engage with the Service Users/Carers Participation Group whose aim is to help shape the work of the NISCC.

Financial Scenarios

There are a number of financial considerations which will impact on how much progress the Council will be able to make in taking forward the Strategic Objectives set out in this Corporate Plan. As the economy enters recession, it is likely there will be significant constraints on public expenditure with consequent implications for the Council's Grant in Aid. The Council will also be required to make efficiency savings in line with targets set out in the Comprehensive Spending Review.

The availability of resources will determine the speed with which the Council will be able to take forward the roll out of the Registration Programme.

During the period of the Corporate Plan, the Council will examine the level of income to be generated from Registration Fees and the levels at which such Fees should be set for different Parts of the Register.

Strategic Objectives

The NISCC's Strategic Objectives are as follows:

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1

To strengthen public protection through the registration of the Social Care workforce

Achievements:

The NISCC has successfully taken forward the DHSSPS policy to register the social care workforce in Northern Ireland:

- Over 12,000 social workers and social care workers are registered;
- Over 3,000 social workers and social care workers renewed their registration on 1 June 2008;
- Robust registration rules, policies and procedures are in place;
- A new bespoke registration system is in place which has streamlined the registration process.

We aim to:

- Complete the registration of adult residential care workers;
- Maintain an accurate Social Care Register which supports public protection;
- Continue to drive efficiency and effectiveness in the registration process;
- Develop a financial framework around registration which will be explicit about how registration is to be funded;
- Work with DHSSPS to secure sufficient resources to support the registration function;
- Work with the DHSSPS to bring forward compulsory registration for social care workers;
- Commence the roll out of registration to domiciliary care workers and day care workers, subject to the agreement of DHSSPS;
- Work in partnership with the General Social Care Council, the Scottish Social Services Council, and the Care Council for Wales to ensure appropriate UK alignment on registration policies and procedures.

Milestones:

- By 2009/10 NISCC will have reviewed the costs of registration and made recommendations to DHSSPS on a framework for the funding of registration and principles underpinning the level of registration fees;
- By 2009/10 the NISCC Fitness to Practise Framework will be implemented for Social Workers;
- By 2011/12 NISCC will have completed the registration of adult residential care workers, subject to compulsory registration being in place and sufficient available resources;
- By 2011/12 NISCC will commence the roll out of registration to domiciliary care workers and day care workers, subject to compulsory registration being in place and sufficient available resources.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2

To strengthen public protection by regulating the conduct and practice of the Social Care workforce

Achievements:

- Robust conduct rules, policies and procedures are in place;
- Over 100 complaints received and investigated;
- 26 committees considered 89 cases;
- 7 conduct hearings have been held and appropriate sanctions administered;
- Over 550 suitability assessments for registration completed.

We aim to:

- Ensure that the Codes of Practice for social care workers and their employers are fit for purpose and disseminated widely;
- Enforce the Codes of Practice for social care workers through the efficient investigation of complaints about misconduct;
- Work in partnership with the Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority, to ensure their regulation of the Codes of Practice for social care employers;
- Produce guidance on social work and social care practice based on lessons learned from conduct investigations;
- Publish an annual report on the NISCC's conduct activity;

- Work with the DHSSPS to secure sufficient resources to deliver an effective and efficient conduct function;
- Ensure the NISCC's conduct function meets high standards as measured against established principles of good regulation;
- Continue to drive efficiency and effectiveness in the conduct process;
- Work in partnership with GSCC, SSSC and CCW to ensure appropriate UK alignment on conduct policies and procedures.

Milestones:

- By 2009/10 NISCC will have developed a communication strategy to ensure that the Codes of Practice are disseminated widely, with particular emphasis on users of services and their carers;
- By 2009/10 NISCC will have published an annual report on conduct activity;
- By 2010/11 NISCC will have reviewed the conduct function against agreed standards of Regulatory Excellence;
- Annually NISCC will produce practice guidance based on lessons learned from conduct investigations, subject to available resources.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3

To improve the quality of Social Care through the development, promotion and regulation of social work education and training

Achievements:

- The NISCC has standards in place to ensure the monitoring and development of social work education at degree and post qualifying levels;
- At degree level the number of applications to social work qualifying training has continued to be very strong;
- At post qualifying level, a new post qualifying education and training framework has been developed and is in place (the N.I. P.Q. Framework);
- An increase in PQ activities as staff strive to complete awards under the old UK PQ system;
- PQ training has been raised to Master's level.

We aim to:

- Ensure the content, design and assessment arrangements for qualifying and post-qualifying programmes are responsive and remain fit for purpose within a rapidly changing environment;

- Ensure effective and efficient social work education partnership arrangements are in place to inform strategic planning and promote regional consistency and which represent value for money;
- To widen participation to entry to the Degree in Social Work;
- Monitor and evaluate applications, enrolments, progression and outcomes from the social work degree on an annual basis;
- Support the improvement of Social Work practice in all sectors and settings through the implementation of the recommendations of the review of the Degree in Social Work;
- Support the provision of a sustainable high quality supply of practice learning opportunities through the development and implementation of a regional strategy for practice learning;
- Monitor the quality and quantity of practice learning opportunities, and support providers to meet NISCC's standards;
- Ensure that the NISCC standards for post qualifying education and training are met through monitoring the implementation of the PQ Framework;
- Ensure arrangements are in place to support the implementation of the PQ Framework through the incorporation of the NIPQETP into the NISCC.

Milestones:

- Ensure the NISCC quality standards for the degree in social work are met through annual quality assurance mechanisms;
- By 2009/10 recommendations from the review of the degree in social work will be prioritised and implemented;
- By 2009/10 Practice Learning strategy agreed with DHSSPS and recommendations taken forward;
- By 2009/10 Northern Ireland Post Qualifying Education and Training Partnership will be fully incorporated into the operational and governance structures of the NISCC;
- Ensure the NISCC standards for post qualifying education and training are met through annual quality assurance mechanisms.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4

To strengthen and support the professionalism of the Social Care workforce

Achievements:

- The NISCC has collaborated with DHSSPS to produce and launch the PSS Development and Training Strategy 2006-2016;
- The NISCC has developed and reviewed National Occupational Standards in a range of social care areas;
- The NISCC has developed a Sector Skills Agreement and a Sector Qualifications and Learning Strategy which are based on the PSS Development and Training Strategy and the needs of employers;
- The NISCC has established a system for engagement with key stakeholders through the Workforce Development Committee;

We aim to:

- Ensure Social Work and Social Care workers are fit to practise by identifying appropriate qualifications and training for job levels linked to re-registration requirements;
- Improve staff competence and outcomes for service users through the implementation of an annual action plan for the PSS Development and Training Strategy 2006-2016;
- In partnership with UK partners, develop, approve and promote national occupational standards for Social Work, Social Care and the children and young peoples' workforces;
- Identify and support the education and training needs of Social Work, Social Care and the children and young peoples' workforces in Northern Ireland.

Milestones:

- By 2009/10 funding arrangements will be agreed with the Department of Education in NI (DENI) in relation to work involving the children and young peoples' workforces, for which strategic responsibility lies with DENI;
- By 2010/11 the NISCC, in collaboration with Skills for Care and Development, will develop and approve a Qualification and Credit Framework to ensure training and qualifications are fit for purpose and are linked to revised National Occupational Standards;
- By 2011/12 work will be underway (linked to the targets on the registration of the Social Care Workforce) on the NISCC Fitness to Practise Framework for Social Care Workers.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 5

To discharge its responsibilities having regard to the views of users of social care services, carers, registrants and other key stakeholders

Achievements:

- There has been very successful engagement with users and carers of services through the NISCC Users and Carers Reference Groups and more recently by the establishment of the Users Participation Group;
- Service users and carers have had major input into the standards of Social Work education;
- In collaboration with RQIA and SCIE, the NISCC has carried out a major piece of research on user involvement entitled “Looking Out from the Middle”;
- The NISCC has established a Registrants’ Committee to improve engagement with Social Care Workers on the Register.

We aim to:

- Engage with people who use social care services, registrants, employers, the public and stakeholders to ensure that their views inform NISCC’s work;
- Continue to work in partnership with key stakeholders to raise the profile of the social care sector and promote public confidence in the social care workforce;
- Actively promote the role and function of the NISCC and increase understanding of the benefits of workforce registration, development and regulation to people who use social care services, registrants, employers, the public and stakeholders;
- Increase awareness about training opportunities and choices that are available across the Social Work, Social Care and the children and young peoples’ workforces and provide and disseminate quality information and support materials.

Milestones:

- By 2009/10 the NISCC User Participation Group will have agreed a Work Plan setting out objectives for user participation within the NISCC;
- By 2009/10 the NISCC Registrants Committee will have agreed a Work Plan setting out objectives for engagement with registrants to inform the work of the NISCC;
- By 2009/10 the NISCC will review and disseminate Social Work & Social Care information/promotional resources to careers networks;

- By 2010/11 (linked to Strategic Objective 2), materials to support the Codes of Practice will be developed and circulated to the social care sector and the public to promote confidence in social care;

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 6

To maximise the contribution of our human and financial resources by investing in our people and delivering value for money in all our activities, whilst ensuring the highest levels of governance in Council

Achievements:

- The NISCC was accredited with IIP status in 2005 and was reaccredited in June 2008;
- The NISCC consistently performs well against budget, illustrated by a breakeven position at the end of the 2007/08 financial year;
- The NISCC has successfully adopted and implemented the Internal Controls Assurance Framework and attained Substantive level of compliance in 2007/08 as verified by Internal Audit;
- The NISCC has developed a risk register and aligned this to its business plan during the 2008/09 financial year;
- The NISCC has operated within the Governance framework, as detailed in its Management Statement and Financial Memorandum, and as part of the governance process has participated fully with the DHSSPS in respect of Accountability meetings, submission of an Annual Report and an Accountability Review.

We aim to:

- Ensure regularity and propriety in the stewardship of public funds, as articulated in the NISCC Management Statement and Financial Memorandum;
- Work in accordance with the standards we have already achieved as an Investor in People Organisation and investigate further business models to support organisational development;
- Develop a Human Resources and Accommodation strategy that will meet the workforce needs of the Council into the future;
- Improve the effectiveness of organisational systems, policies and procedures to support enhanced business performance;
- Ensure that risks are managed effectively at all levels throughout the organisation;

- Ensure improved information provision in respect of the registered workforce, regulated social work education activity and social care training and funding opportunities.

Milestones

- During the period 2009 - 2012 the NISCC will endeavour to work with the DHSSPS to secure an adequate operating budget, which is reflective of the work undertaken by the NISCC, while adhering to the restraints placed on it as a result of the CSR and any resulting efficiency savings;
- During 2009/10 the NISCC will work with the DHSSPS on implementing the recommendations of the Business Case submitted to ensure appropriate resources are identified to undertake, fully, the Registration function;
- By 2009/10 the Training Needs Analysis working group will implement a structured training programme for the organisation;
- By 2010/11 the NISCC will work with all staff in order to ensure lIP status is retained;
- During the period of this Corporate Plan the NISCC will continue to work on the Controls Assurance Standards framework to ensure robust systems of internal control exist at all levels of the organization;
- Annually, the NISCC will ensure the Risk Register is fully updated and linked to the objectives as stated in the Corporate and Business plans;
- Annually, the NISCC will provide a report containing information on the registered workforce, regulated social work education activity including data on inputs, progression, outputs and outcomes and social care training and funding opportunities.

Council Membership

The Council is made up of a Chair and 12 non-executive members. The members represent a wide range of interests in the field of social care. Membership is split equally between:

- **Lay members** - people who have direct experience as users of services, carers or voluntary workers
- **Stakeholder members** - people involved in service delivery/commissioning, trade unions, education/training, professional bodies, or allied professions
- **Registrant members** - people who are employed as social care workers

Chairman



Dr Jeremy Harbison (CB) has been Chair of the NI Social Care Council, established as the regulatory body for the social care profession in Northern Ireland, from 2001. He is a Commissioner of the Legal Services Commission, a Council member of the University of Ulster and a Trustee of the Community Foundation for NI. Jeremy currently chairs a group on promoting employment for people with disabilities for OFMDFM. Previously he had worked in the Northern Ireland Civil Service after ten years as a practising Clinical Psychologist

Non-Executive Members



Mr Joe Blake CQSW lives in Belfast. Mr Blake is a self-employed Training and Evaluation consultant and has carried out inspection work in the statutory and voluntary sectors on behalf of the Department's Social Services Inspectorate, Comic Relief and Co-operation Ireland among others. Mr Blake holds no other public appointments and has not engaged in any political activity in the last five years.



Mrs Geraldine Campbell is involved in regulation, governance and stakeholder engagement in the voluntary and public sectors. She was formerly the Chief Executive of The HIV Support Centre and a Consumer Services Manager in the NHSSB. She holds a number of other public appointments as an advisor on consumer engagement to the Food Standards Agency, a member of Council of the General Osteopathic Council and a member of the Northern Ireland Committee of The BIG Lottery. She is a Trustee of Citizen's Advice Belfast and has not engaged in any political activity in the past five years.



Mrs Julie Erskine MSc Chartered FCIPD BA (Hons) lives in Carrickfergus. Mrs Erskine has worked in the healthcare service industry for over 25 years. She was the Operations Director of a Belfast-based private healthcare company, having also worked as Support Services Director for the same company. Mrs Erskine was previously an Operations Manager with the WAVE Trauma Centre in Belfast. Mrs Erskine holds no other public appointments and has not engaged in any political activity in the last five years.



Mr Glenn Houston BA CQSW lives in Holywood. In March 2007, he was appointed Executive Director of Social Work and Director of Women's & Children's Services in the Northern HSC Trust. Prior to this, Mr Houston was Chief Executive of Craigavon & Banbridge HSS Trust. He has previously worked in Homefirst Community HSS Trust, initially as Director of Planning & Information and then as Director of Mental Health. Mr Houston holds no other public appointments and has not engaged in any political activity in the last five years.



Ms Miriam Karp MSc BA (hons) lives in Belfast. Ms Karp is Director of her own consultancy firm, working extensively in training and consultancy in the public, private and community sectors. She is also a Management Lecturer and a Standard's Monitor with the Open University. She set up and established the Sexual Health Training Team for the Eastern HSS Board and North and West Belfast HSS Trust and also set up the Aids Education Team for the Eastern HSS Board. Ms Karp is a parent volunteer member of the Down's Syndrome Association and SALTO, a Special Needs Gymnastics Club. She is a member of the General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland for which she receives travel and expenses. Ms Karp has not engaged in any political activity in the last five years.



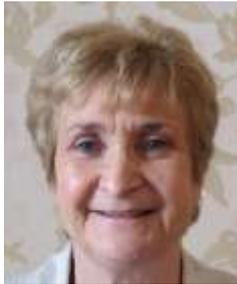
Mrs Ruth Lavery BCL (Oxon) LLB BL lives in Lisburn. A former Senior Lecturer in Law at Queen's University Belfast, Mrs Lavery is currently a panel Chair of the Social Security Appeals Tribunal. In addition she has been a Chair of the Mental Health Review Tribunal since September 2008. She is also a former non-executive board member of both the Western HSS Board and Down Lisburn HSS Trust. Mrs Lavery served as an Equality Commissioner for six years until 2005. She holds no other public appointments and has been engaged in political activity for the Ulster Unionist Party in the last five years.



Mrs Gillian McGaughey BL LLB lives in Belfast. Mrs McGaughey is a Barrister specialising in Family & Child Law and lectures at the Institute of Professional Legal Studies, QUB. She is also a Legal Assessor for the Nursing & Midwifery Council, London, a panel Chair of the Police Appeals Tribunal and a review panel member of the NI Legal Services Commission. Mrs McGaughey was a Stakeholder member of the NI Social Care Council prior to its reconstitution on 1 October 2007. She holds no other public appointments and has not engaged in any political activity in the last five years.



Mr Brendan Mc Keever BSc lives in Derry. Mr McKeever worked for over ten year as Facilitator with the Family Information Group in Derry. The Group raised issues that impacted families of disabled children, from their perspective. Previously he worked in the Schools Services Department of the Western Education & Library Board. Currently Brendan is working on user involvement projects with universities in Northern Ireland. He was a Lay Member of the NI Social Care Council (NISCC) prior to its reconstitution on 1 October 2007 and continues to hold membership of the NISCC today. Mr Mc Keever holds no other public appointments and has not engaged in any party political activity in the last five years.



Mrs Maire McMahon CCETSW lives in Greenisland. Mrs McMahon retired last year from her post as Assistant Chief Inspector of Social Services with the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety. She currently works part-time as a self-employed consultant. Mrs McMahon is a committee member of the Carrickfergus branch of the St Vincent de Paul Society. She holds no other public appointments and has not engaged in any political activity in the last five years.



Mr James Perry MSc FCA lives in Ballymena. Mr Perry is a Chartered Accountant and is currently self-employed, with an interest in a small family business. He is also an Associate with the Centre for Competitiveness, and was previously employed as Corporate Services Director with the Northern Ireland Tourist Board. Mr Perry worked for nearly 20 years as a Senior Manager with Viridian Group PLC. He is currently a Director of Ballymena Business Centre, Chair of the Board of Governors of Ballymena Academy and a member of the Board of Studies at the School of Management & Economics at QUB. Mr Perry holds no other public appointments and has not engaged in any political activity in the last five years.



Dr Trevor Spratt lives in Belfast and is presently a Senior Lecturer and Director of Education - Social Work at QUB. He was previously a Lecturer in Social Work at Queen's University and the University of Ulster, Jordanstown. Dr Spratt holds no other public appointments and has not engaged in any political activity in the last five years.



Mrs Eleanor Taggart CQSW, DipSCM QUB lives in Newtownabbey. Mrs Taggart has worked in social work, education, training and management for 37 years mostly in the statutory sector, primarily in the Northern HSS Board area. In addition, she has been involved with a wide range of voluntary organisations particularly in the area of services for people with disabilities. Mrs Taggart was a NI Rep on CCETSW before becoming a Stakeholder Member of the NI Social Care Council prior to its reconstitution on 1 October 2007. She holds no other public appointments and has not engaged in any political activity in the last five years.

Statement of Council Members Responsibilities

Council Members have the following responsibilities:

- They should ensure that high standards of corporate governance are observed at all times.
- They should establish the overall strategic direction of the NISCC within the policy and resources framework agreed with the DHSSPS.
- They should ensure that the Council operates within the limits of its statutory authority and any delegated authority agreed with the DHSSPS and in accordance with any other conditions relating to the use of public funds.
- They should ensure that the Council has taken into account guidance issued by the DHSSPS in reaching decisions.
- Members are accountable to the Minister through the Permanent Secretary of the DHSSPS.

The Council's membership reflects three broad groups of interests: lay people (including users of services and carers), registrants (staff eligible to be registered), and stakeholders (employers, unions, education providers, etc). Members have been appointed by the Minister for Health, Social Services and Public Safety under the Public Appointments System for either two, three or four year terms of office.

The Council usually meets once every two months (on alternative months to Committee meetings).

List of Abbreviations

DHSSPS	Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety
HPSS	Health and Personal Social Services
liP	Investors in People
NDPB	Non-Departmental Public Body
NIPQETP	Northern Ireland Post Qualifying Education and Training Partnership
NISCC	Northern Ireland Social Care Council
PSS	Personal Social Services
RQIA	Regulation and Quality Improvement Authority
SCIE	Social Care Institute for Excellence
SSI	Social Services Inspectorate