

Agenda Item 3 Paper Ref 01

Paper for the Board

Minutes of the Social Work England Board Meeting, Friday 18 September 2020

This paper is to approve.

Sponsor

The Chair, Lord Kamlesh Patel

Author

Claudia Thompson, Directors' Assistant

Date

23 October 2020

Reviewed by

The Chair, Lord Kamlesh Patel

Colum Conway, Chief Executive

Minutes of the Social Work England Board Meeting
Friday 18 September 2020, 10.30 am, by Videoconference/The Don Meeting Room

Board Members:	Lord Patel of Bradford Colum Conway Dr Andrew McCulloch Ann Harris Baroness Tyler of Enfield Dr Helen Phillips Jonathan Gorvin Mark Lam	Chair Chief Executive Non-Executive Director Non-Executive Director Non-Executive Director Non-Executive Director Non-Executive Director Non-Executive Director
Social Work England staff in attendance	Alex Hayward-Miller Alison Edbury Amy Soar Emma Mortlock Greg Ross-Sampson Jonathan Dillon Rachel McAssey Sarah Blackmore Tracy Watterson	MI Analyst, Corporate Governance Manager Head of Policy HR Business Partner Assistant Director, Corporate Executive Director, Fitness to Practise Head of Registration Executive Director, Strategy, Policy and Engagement Assistant Director, People and Business Support
Guests:	Alan Clamp	Professional Standards Authority
Public Observers:	Berry Rose Jo McCausland Michael Wood Philip Bowden Richard Simpson Rosie Hancock Tom Sutton	Head of Triage and Case Progression, Social Work England Project Delivery and Improvement Manager, Social Work England Good Governance Institute Head of Adjudications, Social Work England Interim Head of Finance, Social Work England Senior Lawyer, Social Work England Department for Education
Minute Taker:	Claudia Thompson	Directors' Assistant, Social Work England
Apologies:	Mark Bennett Philip Hallam	Department of Health and Social Care Executive Director, Registration, Quality Assurance and Legal

1. Welcome and Introductions

- 1.1 The Chair, Lord Patel welcomed Board members, guests and observers to the meeting.
Apologies were noted.

2. Declaration of Interests

- 2.1 Andrew McCulloch declared there is another live contract between Social Work England and GM Services, International, for which he is the Chair.
- 2.2 Baroness Tyler of Enfield will become the Commissioner of the Financial Inclusion Commission and President of the Money Advice Trust Charity in October. A formal declaration will be sent to the Governance Manager.
- 2.3 The Chair has received an invitation from The Right Honourable Matt Hancock MP, Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, to join an advisory group regarding the future of Public Health England. The Chair will update the Governance Manager.

Action: Board members to update the Governance Manager on any further changes to the register of interests.

3. The Role of the Professional Standards Authority

- 3.1 Alan Clamp, Chief Executive, Professional Standards Authority gave an overview to the Board on the work of the PSA and reported on key ongoing pieces of work.
- 3.1.1 The PSA is an independent body accountable to the UK Government and the devolved administration. The organisation exists to protect the public by improving the regulation and registration of health and care professionals.
- 3.1.2 The PSA reviews the work of regulators using 18 standards of regulation, which includes an annual performance review. The first annual review meeting for Social Work England is scheduled to begin in December 2020. The PSA is currently streamlining the performance review process to make it as effective as possible for all regulators.
- 3.1.3 The PSA reviews Fitness to Practise (FtP) decisions to ensure they are adequately sufficient to protect the public. There are more than 3000 decisions per year to review across 10 regulators.
- 3.1.4 The PSA holds an approved register for organisations that are not regulated under statute but have registered health and care practitioners, e.g. counsellors, sports therapists.
- 3.1.5 The Authority provides a 'Think Tank' role which provides policy advice to the government and conducts research to improve regulation, this is shared with regulators. A symposium, virtual event 'Regulation Reset' has been scheduled for 3, 4 and 5 November 2020, correspondence has been sent to The Chair and Chief Executive. There will be a learning

report regarding the regulatory response to COVID-19. The report will be published in January 2021.

Action: Governance Manager to circulate information on the virtual Regulation Reset symposium to all Board members.

3.2 The Board asked about the PSA programme of research. It was explained there is a policy and research forum that meets quarterly, all regulators are represented on the forum. Alan Clamp invited the Board to contact him or Christine Braithwaite about the forum. Further questions were raised regarding the oversight of Fitness to Practise outcomes and the PSA's Section 29 powers in relation to the regulation reform agenda and the legislation under which Social Work England has been established. Alan Clamp noted that as a new regulator, Social Work England is acting as a test bed for regulatory reform. It was agreed by the Board that Social Work England stay engaged with the PSA regarding these issues.

3.3 The Chair thanked Alan Clamp for his presentation and the support given to Social Work England by the PSA.

Alan Clamp left the meeting at 11.10 am.

4. Minutes of the Last Meeting

4.1 The Minutes of the last meeting, Friday 26 June 2020, **were approved as a correct record.**

5. Matters Arising/Actions not included on the agenda

5.1 Action 3: All Board members to view demo of the digital capability of the CRM and Registration System (Forge). **Update:** A full demo of the Forge system will be organised for the Board meeting 23 October 2020.

6. Chair's Report – verbal

6.1 The Chair reported on the external meetings he has attended. He met with the Good Governance Institute as part of the Board effectiveness work, the Chair of the General Medical Council, the NHS confederation's race observatory, and has met and discussed the potential new WRES for social care (Workforce Race Equality Standards) with a representative from the Department of Health and Social Care. The Chair is on the recruitment panel for the position of the Chair of the Adoption and Special Guidance Leadership Board. The Chair continues to hold regular meetings with the Chief Executive. **The Chair's report was noted by the Board**

7. Chief Executive's Report

7.1 The Chief Executive summarised his report to the Board. He noted that 1 September was an important landmark for Social Work England as it marked the start of the first annual renewals process for social workers. Under policy development he highlighted the work that has been focused on preparations for the autumn comprehensive spending review. A performance

management information dashboard will be included in the Chief Executive's report as part of the quarterly Board meetings.

- 7.2 The Board noted the importance of a response to the consultation from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications and Regulation of Professions. The Chief Executive informed the Board that a draft response is due mid-October and will be shared with the Board.

Action: Chief Executive to circulate draft response to the consultation on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications and Regulation of Professions.

- 7.3 The Board asked about the impact of COVID-19 on the organisation. The Chief Executive highlighted the positive response from all since the organisation moved to working from home in March. He noted that while there have been challenges in responding to new ways of working much has been done to manage and address them. He also noted that the register for temporary registration will remain as a contingency against potential capacity issues in social work, in addressing an anticipated increase in referrals to both adults and children's services in the coming months.

- 7.4 The Chief Executive also referenced regulation and the work with the Fitness to Practise case load. The Executive Director, Fitness to Practise reported that overall the pandemic has not had an impact on incoming caseloads to Fitness to Practise over the recent months and there is little evidence at this stage of an increase in complaints as a result of social work practices relating to COVID 19. There have been challenges around progressing ongoing cases through the stages of Fitness to Practise and in our ability to progress hearings. A more detailed look at our Fitness to Practise process is an agenda item for the October Board meeting.

- 7.5 The Chair thanked the Chief Executive for his report . **The report was noted by the Board.**

8. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Framework

- 8.1 The Executive Director, Strategy, Policy and Engagement introduced the report.

- 8.2 The Executive Director, Strategy, Policy and Engagement highlighted the EDI Steering Group and the work to develop and oversee the implementation of the organisation's action plan. This involved work to develop the Workforce Race Equality Standards (WRES) and work with the Association of Directors, for Children and Adult Services.

- 8.3 The Board discussed key points from the report including a total diversity approach and the monitoring of the framework's implementation with regular performance MI data. The Board noted that the plan is an ambitious one and consideration of capacity for delivery should be kept under review. The Board welcomed the priority given by Social Work England to equality, diversity and inclusion, and thanked all involved in the work completed so far.

Action: Executive Director, Strategy Policy and Engagement to feed back to the EDI Steering Group Meeting, points raised on total diversity, on capacity and on monitoring.

8.4 The Chair thanked the Executive Director, Strategy, Policy and Engagement for the report.
The report was noted by the Board.

9. Registration Renewals

9.1 The Head of Registration on behalf of the Executive Director, Registration, Quality Assurance and Legal, introduced the report and updated that:

- Renewals opened on 1 September, to date over 20,000 social workers have applied for renewal with an additional 3,000 applications in progress.
- Satisfaction survey results showed that 50% of respondents took less than 15 minutes to complete the renewals process, 78% took less than 30 minutes to renew.

9.2 The Chair thanked the Head of Registration for the report. **The report was noted by the Board.**

10. Continuous Professional Development

10.1 The Executive Director, Strategy, Policy and Engagement introduced the report.

10.2 The Board asked who within the social work sector defines the criteria for CPD and quality assurance. The Executive Director for Strategy, Policy and Engagement acknowledged that this has been a significant issue for the social work profession for some time. She explained that there is now an opportunity for the further development of CPD within the profession and this is bound with how Social Work England would like to develop and approach the whole profession within the post qualifying landscape. It is early days, but it is likely that Social Work England will have a strong voice on CPD and will be in a position to offer research, data and examples of sound practice to the sector in the years ahead. Whilst a better framework is required, social workers, with the assistance of their Line Managers, will be best placed to decide on the most appropriate CPD for them – it is their evidence for ongoing competence.

10.3 The Chair indicated that it would be useful to have a strategy session for the Board on the post qualifying landscape for social workers in England to include CPD.

Action: Executive Director, Strategy, Policy and Engagement to schedule strategy session on the social work post qualifying landscape.

10.4 The Chair thanked the Executive Director, Strategy Policy and Engagement for the report.
The report was noted by the Board.

11. Research Report

11.1 The Head of Policy introduced the report.

11.2 The Research was commissioned in December 2019, as a review into current themes within the social work sector and how social workers see the profession since the change of regulator. A public perception survey was also commissioned. The Board discussed the findings and were invited to forward ideas for future research to the Head of Policy.

11.3 The Board discussed several key points from the presentation and recommended a research strategy session.

Action: Executive Director, Strategy Policy and Engagement, and Head of Policy to schedule research strategy session, April 2021.

11.4 The Chair thanked the Head of Policy for the presentation to the Board.

12. People Engagement Survey and Action Plan - deferred

12.1 In the interest of time, this Agenda item was deferred to the October Board meeting.

Action: People Engagement Survey and Action Plan to be scheduled on the Agenda for 23 October Board meeting.

13. Board Meetings: Forward Look

13.1 There were no amendments.

14. Any Other Business

14.1 There was no other business.

15. Date of Next Meeting

15.1 Friday 23 October 2020.

Meeting closed at 12.40 pm.

To Note: Summary of Actions

1. Board members to update the Governance Manager on any further changes to the Register of Interests.
2. Governance Manager to circulate information on the PSA Regulation Reset symposium to all Board members.
3. Chief Executive to circulate draft response to the consultation on the Recognition of Professional Qualifications and Regulation of Professions.
4. Executive Director, Strategy Policy and Engagement to feed back to the EDI Steering Group Meeting, points raised on total diversity, on capacity and on monitoring.
5. Executive Director, Strategy, Policy and Engagement to schedule strategy session on the social work post qualifying landscape.
6. Executive Director, Strategy, Policy & Engagement, and Head of Policy to schedule research strategy session April 2021.
7. People Engagement Survey and Action Plan to be scheduled on the Agenda for 23 October Board meeting.