



WESTERN HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES COUNCIL

Work Programme and Summary of Performance 2005-2006

The Western Health & Social Services Council's Work Programme sets out its annual objectives to meet the overall aims of Health & Social Services Councils.

This report on performance ensures that the Council remains accountable to the public and the Department of Health & Social Services.

The report is supported by additional material attached in the Annex.

Aim 1: To increase visibility and accessibility to members of the public

Objectives	WHSSC Work Programme	Performance
<p>To engage the public in HSSC role and activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Build up database of Community and voluntary sector groups in the WHSS Board area • Differentiate varying interest groups • Engage groups and individuals in the work of the Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Merged information from WHSSC/Trusts/Boards and Community networks to build local database ✓ Identified communities of interest including geographic and healthcare groups ✓ Engaged with local groups on service changes – for example Hospital Campaign Group; parents of children with Autism; Mental Health service users
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise public awareness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ HSSC leaflet and Lets Talk booklet widely circulated to for example GP, dental, pharmacy practices, libraries and Trusts ✓ HSSC leaflet translated into 10 key minority languages ✓ Each monthly Council meeting was covered in the appropriate local Press ✓ Chair and Chief Officer represented the Council at public events
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Provided monthly information updates to website manager

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ There were 7984 visits to the WHSSC website
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve access to Council meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Introduced narrative style minuting of meetings rather than business minuting to increase public understanding of Council work and its response to issues ✓ Introduced clear action points from each meeting ✓ Reviewed location and venues for monthly meetings to ensure full public access including the use of possible community venues
Implement Media Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase media's awareness of the Council's role and function • Increase media coverage of WHSSC activity • Ensure local and regional media have full access to Council meetings • Ensure local and regional media have access to the Chair and Chief Officer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Provided the view of the Council and its members on a range of issues - for example, SLT Governance and Risk review; Ambulance service provision in rural areas ✓ Chief Officer and Chair provided interviews to BBC and UTV radio and television news programmes – eg: ✓ Chief Officer gave radio interview re arson attack on Altnagelvin Hospital Renal Unit ✓ Chief Officer gave radio interviews to BBC and Radio Foyle re Minister's announced plans to deal with waiting lists ✓ Journalists have out of hours access to Chief Officer

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Developed good working relationships with radio and print media journalists
<p>Increase accessibility of the HSSCs to public</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure monthly Council meetings are accessible to the public • Provide opportunities for local communities to address Council 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Council meetings were rotated across all 5 District Council areas ✓ Newspaper notices were published in local press ✓ 3 monthly meetings were held in the evening 6-9 pm ✓ Community/individual presentations were made to Council

Comment:: Use of community venues for monthly meetings proved difficult as many do not have the appropriate facilities to cater for numbers in excess of 25. We do continue to use District Council and Education facilities where appropriate. The Council works hard to maintain its independence and being seen as independent by the public. We therefore do not use Trust or Board facilities for our monthly public meetings. We do however use HPSS facilities for internal meetings as this is best VFM. We try to avoid using commercial premises where possible.

The WHSSC has become a recognised media point of contact for commentary on the public interest in health and social care.

Aim 2: To monitor HPSS provision to the public

Objectives	WHSSC Work Programme	Performance
To visit health and social care facilities	Visiting protocols to be adhered to	✓ Protocols agreed and implemented as appropriate to each type of visit
	All members to receive appropriate training for visiting and observational audits	✓ Member training carried out prior to 'Bugwatch' Hospital survey
	Appropriate visits completed and feedback supplied	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Visited Altnagelvin Cancer Unit – Chief Officer + 3 members ✓ Bugwatch – members undertook survey in Altnagelvin and produced a report of their findings to the Trust and Department ✓ Visited maternity unit Altnagelvin – antenatal and postnatal wards ✓ Members reported on visits at Council meetings
Monitor and act on public interest concerns raised by members, service users or media	To receive information from the HPSS on policy, commissioning and delivery of services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Eight presentations were made to the Council from the WHSSB; DHSSPS; LHSCG; Sperrin Lakeland and Altnagelvin Trusts ✓ Workshops on OBC for new southwest hospital Enniskillen and Local hospital Omagh ✓ Workshops on Infection Control
	To set up working groups to monitor service provision	✓ Working Groups were set up for Orthopaedics and Autism services

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Waiting List monitoring group set up for Orthopaedics; Ophthalmology; OT and Breast care clinics
	Mental Health Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Ensured that Sperrin Lakeland Trust included psychogeriatric services in their review of Mental Health service provision ✓ Responded to Foyle Trust's Mental Health Review 'Moving Forward' ✓ Responded to consultation 'PSNI procedures and Guidance for dealing with Mentally Disordered Persons' ✓ Paddy McGowan Chair was honoured for his outstanding work in mental health and his commitment to the community at the Social Entrepreneur's Ireland Inaugural Awards Ceremony, Dublin City University
	Risk & Governance Review Sperrin Lakeland Trust	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Chief Officer represented the Council on Review Steering group
	Proposed service provision under DBS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Council requested details of proposed future service provision for new southwest and local hospitals ✓ Council met with Board, Department and Sperrin Lakeland Trust to discuss service provision
	GP services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Chief Officer carried out 7 site visits for proposed closure of branch surgeries (under CSA guidelines)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Out of Hours premises access site visits by Chair and Chief Officer – Erne, Strabane & TCH ✓ Availability of ‘flu’ vaccine in GP surgeries ✓ Chief Officer chaired public meeting on the amalgamation of branch surgeries in rural area
	Carers and respite services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Chief Officer met with carers and advocated on their behalf for better access to respite services
	Ambulance services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Chief Officer member of Local Ambulance Liaison Group ✓ Members’ issues/concerns re ambulance provision raised at LALG
	Annual Liaison meetings between WHSSC and WHSSB; Sperrin Lakeland, Foyle and Altnagelvin Trusts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Chair and Chief Officer met regularly with the Chair and Chief Executive of 3 Trusts and the Board ✓ Council annual Liaison meetings held with 3 Trusts and the Board ✓ Action points from these meetings followed up by relevant Trusts or Board
	Independent Inquiries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Chief Officer supported parents through initial inquiry into hyponatraemia deaths ✓ Chief Officer was a member of an Independent Inquiry panel into a homicide in the Eastern Board area

	Member representation on Groups/Committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Members sit on 26 Groups/Committees in order to monitor service changes and make representation in the public interest ✓ Chair member of ROI Mental Health Service Review Steering Group and chair of Advisory subgroup (Vision for Change)
	Chief Officer and Business Support Manager Group representation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Chief Officer sits on 10 local and regional groups/Committees ✓ BSM sits on a Board Forum and a Regional Working Group ✓ Chief Officer member of ROI Mental Health Service Review Advisory Subgroup (Vision for Change)
Monitor Complaints within the HPSS	Monitor trends across WHSSB area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Chief Officer and BSM met monthly to discuss trends in complaints ✓ Concerns about trends within Primary Care raised with WHSSB
	Influence new HPSS complaints process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Chief Officers met with representatives from the Department to discuss the consultation on HPSS Complaints procedure
	Audit HPSS complaints activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Met with 3 Trusts and Board complaints officers ✓ Chief Officer/BSM attended quarterly meetings of Board Complaints Forum

Comment: The focus of attention for the Council has been on monitoring service provision, safety and capacity. The Council has reflected patient, client, carer and community concerns throughout its monitoring

activities. The Council uses complaints data to act as an indicator or barometer of the “health” of service provision. Monitoring trends in complaints has allowed the Council to raise any serious concerns at an early stage with the HPSS and to provide an opportunity to them to take remedial action.

Aim 3: Advise on HPSS policies, strategies and operations

Objectives	WHSSC Work Programme	Performance
Influence the development of HPSS policies and strategies	Advocate for and promote user involvement in HPSS bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Chief Officer convened and chaired Community Focus Group meetings in Enniskillen and Omagh – presentations by Department officials re ‘Making Services Safer in SLT’. ✓ Met residents of local community regarding concerns about new Care in the Community residential centre in Coolnagard ✓ Chief Officer member of Department’s Clinical & Social Care Governance subgroup ✓ Chief Officer member of Department’s Working Group on Policy and Guidance for user involvement
Influence operational decision makers	Maintain and expand the sphere of influence of the Council within the HPSS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ See Aim 2 - Member and staff representation on Groups/Committees across HPSS
	Maintain appropriate representation on Committees with Health & Social Care agenda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Carried out review of members’ representation on Groups and Committees to ensure appropriate representation within capacity
Represent public interest in HPSS consultations	Respond to local and regional consultations	<p>Responses included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Sperrin Lakeland: Making Services Safer in SLT

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Foyle Trust's Mental Health Review 'Moving Forward' ✓ RPA Proposals ✓ 'PSNI procedures and Guidance for dealing with Mentally Disordered Persons' ✓ Inputted to Joint Council responses ✓ Chief Officer one of 4 panel members for GMCs public consultation with regard to fitness to practice
	Use a variety of methods for responding to consultations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Workshops held where Members received a presentation from officers involved in the consultation. Notes taken from discussion to formulate Council response to consultation

Comment: The Western Council has been very active both locally and regionally in influencing and advising on HPSS policies, strategies and operations. This has been particularly note worthy considering the Council's limited staffing capacity and the dependence on the voluntary input of its members.

Aim 4: To provide complaints assistance

Objectives	WHSSC Work Programme	Performance
Support and advise service users and carers when making complaints about the HPSS	Increase capacity within the Council to maintain this service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Business Support Manager supported Chief Officer in providing complaints and advocacy support (as of October 2005)
	Provide information and signposting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Supported approx 160 clients in providing information and signposting
	Supporting complainants through all stages of the complaints process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ In addition supported approx 61 clients throughout the complaints process ✓ Assisted complainants to write letters of complaint ✓ Supported complainants at meetings with Trust officials ✓ Supported families in Case Conference reviews ✓ Supported complainants through Independent Review process and meetings ✓ Supported carers in Carer's assessment meetings ✓ Supported families to meet with Coroner
	Ensure access to support for clients	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Access provided through use of telephone, e-mail, website, postal and meetings in Council office ✓ Clients were offered support at a

		venue to suit their needs including the client's own home or at a neutral venue
	Set up HSSC Complaints Officer Forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Joint Councils Complaints Forum formed in January 06 for the purposes of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ peer support to Council Complaints officers ✓ sharing good practice ✓ auditing complaints handling by Trusts in NI ✓ auditing Independent Review handling by Boards in NI ✓ reviewing Councils' joint protocols

Comment: Providing complaints support is a significant element of the Council's annual workload. The 160 clients receiving information and signposting were able to be dealt with relatively quickly and usually as a 'one-off' involvement of staff. However, those clients seeking full support through the complaints process are invariably presenting with very complex and often protracted issues and concerns. Our involvement can range from one month to several years working with the client. On average however Council's involvement is usually about 12 months.

Aim 5: To develop a medium/long term strategy/plan for the HSSCs

Objectives	WHSSC Work Programme	Performance
Contribute to implementing the objectives for Joint Strategic plan for the HSSCs	Monitor progress and activity through the Chief Officers' Forum and the HSSC's Executive Body	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Chief Officers met a minimum of once a month to progress objectives ✓ The HSSC's Executive Forum met quarterly to monitor progress on objectives
Joint HSSC activities	Organise joint member meetings/Conference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Well attended and successful joint conference held in January 2006 to focus on RPA – 11 WHSSC members attended ✓ Quarterly joint member workshop style meetings which include RPA feedback and strategic information/discussion sessions eg Shipman recommendations ✓ Joint activity such as development of 4 HSSC user engagement benchmarking standards
	Contribute to work of PCC Project Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Chair of Western Council member of Project Team – Chief Officer acted as his Deputy ✓ Priority given to this activity including reducing the number of Council meetings in year ✓ Specific drafting tasks undertaken by

		<p>Chief Officer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Stakeholder engagement undertaken including meeting with political representatives, media and general public
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Comment: The Strategic Plan for the Health Councils came about as a result of a joint HSSC's conference in June 2004 to help prepare the way for the proposed changes under RPA. Joint working has brought about benefits to all the Councils, including allowing them to act more strategically, and has helped to strengthen the voice of the public.

Aim 6: To fulfil organisational requirements of the Councils

Objectives	WHSSC Work Programme	Performance
Work within the resources of the Council	Ensure best use of Council resources including budget, staffing and members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Business Support Manager appointed August 2005 part funded by WHSSB ✓ Staff complement – Chief Officer; Senior Manager and 2 Admin staff ✓ Chair and Vice-Chair returned at AGM on 2/6/05 ✓ Budget allocated for 05/06 was £154,000 – including £28,000 allocated from the WHSSB for BSM post ✓ Changes to Council membership after local elections May 05 ✓ New member induction Sept/Oct 05 ✓ Joint working enabled the Council to make better use of limited resources – for example responding to consultations; workshop events etc
	Develop capacity of members to participate in Council activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ CIPFA training ‘On board’ 9 members attended ✓ New members induction carried out ✓ High level of attendance and participation at Council meetings, workshops and seminars
Increase transparency and accountability to the public of the work of the Council	Review style of Council meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Introduced new format for Council Liaison meetings with Trusts and Board to ensure greater transparency

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> and accountability to the public ✓ The Liaison meetings were incorporated into the monthly Council meetings which are open to the public and media ✓ Introduced narrative style minuting of meetings rather than business minuting to increase public understanding of Council work and its response to issues ✓ Introduced clear action points from each meeting
To bring about improvements in the administrative business of the Council	Introduce Council business improvement plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Information/IT and communication improved ✓ See Annex C
Meet statutory obligations	Comply with statutory requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The Chief Officer/Business Support Manager are members of the Western Equality and Human Rights Forum and contributes to the work of the Forum ✓ Chief Officer/BSM members of regional FOI/Records management working groups ✓ Annual returns submitted to Equality Commission; Information Commissioner and Departments re FOI requests ✓ Complied with WHSSB's policies on HR and Finance

Comment: Successful negotiation with WHSSB secured the finances to appoint a Senior Manager to provide additional support to the Chief Officer. WHSSC still operating from 2 adjoining offices; unable to secure additional office space within the building. Filing, library and storage space very limited and impacting on good records management. Considerable travel is required by Chief Officer in carrying out the functions of the Council at local and regional level.

Annex A – List of Members attendance record

Annex B – List of Annual activity

Annex C – Business Improvement Plan

Annex D – Annual Report 05/06