

MINUTES

Social Care Collaborative Reform Board (SCCRB)

10.30am Tuesday 27th January 2026

Microsoft Teams

Members in Attendance:

Peter Toogood (Chair), Department of Health (PT)
Declan McAllister, NISCC (Co Chair) (DMcA)
Aine Morrison, Department of Health (AM)
Anne O'Reilly, NICON (AO'R)
Eilís McDaniel, Department of Health (EMcD)
Elaine Armstrong, Cedar Foundation (EA)
Joleen Cunningham, Carer's NI (JC)
Carina Boyle (*Deputising for Karen O'Brien*), Western HSCT (CB)
Lesley Megarity, UKHCA (LM)
Mark McGuicken, Department of Health (MMcG)
Tracy Reid, NISCC (TR)
Una McKernan, PCC, UMck
Agnes Lunny, Positive Futures (AL)
Colin McMullan, Belfast HSCT (CMcC)
Mary Frances McManus, DCNO (MFMcM)
Kellie Turtle *Deputising John-Patrick Clayton, Unison* (KT)
Aidan Dawson, PHA (AD)
Elaine Connolly, RQIA (EC)
Oisín Martin (*Deputising for Ciara McKillop*), SPPG (OM)

Also in Attendance:

Karen Oldham, Department of Health (KO)
Teri Gourley, Department of Health, PMO (TG)
Laura Boyd, Department of Health, PMO (LB) (Secretariat)
Bernie Duffy, NI Neighbourhood Model of Care Team, DHO (BD)

Apologies:

Diane Spence, Northern HSCT
Gillian Traub, Northern HSCT
Karen O'Brien, Western HSCT
Lesley-Anne Newton, ARC NI Director
Ryan Williams, Connected Health
Sam Humphries, Harmoni
Pauline Shepherd, IHCP
John-Patrick Clayton, Unison
Ciara McKillop SPPG, DoH

Item	Agenda	Action
1	Welcome and Introductions	
1.1	<p>PT welcomed members and noted apologies as recorded above. PT also welcomed those deputising and substantive members attending the meeting, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Kellie Turtle, <i>Deputising John-Patrick Clayton, Unison</i>➤ Carina Boyle, <i>Deputising for Karen O'Brien, Western Trust</i>➤ Mary Frances McManus, new substantive member from Chief Nursing Officer Group in DOH <p>PT advised that IHCP has paused its engagement on reform activity in the absence of a decision to implement the Real Living Wage (RLW). While recognising that the reform work must continue in IHCP's absence, PT emphasised the importance of and need for their participation in addressing the wider issues facing the Social Care Collaborative Reform Board (SCCRB) going forward.</p> <p>AL acknowledged her continued commitment to the work of the SCCR. However, she echoed the concerns raised by IHCP. AL expressed significant concern for the workforce, while recognising the importance of maintaining dialogue and progressing the work of the Board.</p> <p>PT recognised that frustrations are being experienced across the sector and accepted that organisations may take different approaches in response. He further noted that the collaborative work on reform is stronger when all partners are at the table and the Department would continue to explore</p>	

	<p>possibilities to have all members back around the reform table.</p> <p>LM confirmed HCA withdrawal from the FWF in light of the RLW decision, while remaining engaged in the work of the SCCRB and recognising that issues beyond RLW continue to require attention.</p>	
1.2	PT also welcomed Bernie Duffy, from NI Neighbourhood Model of Care Team, who would be providing an update under Agenda Item 6.	
2.	Declarations of Conflicts of Interest	
2.1	No new conflicts of interest were declared.	
3.	Minutes of meeting – 30th September 2025	
3.1	The minutes of meeting on 30 th September 2025 (paper CRB-01-26) were agreed as an accurate record of proceedings. Members were reminded that the minutes would be published on the DoH website.	
4.	Actions / Matters Arising	
4.1	<p>PT referred members to the Action Log (paper CRB2-1-26). Members were content to close actions as recommended in the written update.</p> <p>An update was provided by OM in relation to AP3 from the SCCF Meeting held on 30 September 2025, relating to the sharing of the contract and commissioning specification with OSS.</p> <p>It was noted that the draft contract remains with DLS, who have requested additional information on a number of issues. He reassured members that they are responding and engaging with all requests as quickly as possible to ensure that the work on the contract is progressed.</p> <p>AM asked whether the draft could be shared.</p> <p>LM questioned whether the contract was moving into areas requiring legislative change, noting that this would contribute to further delay, and reiterated the importance of sharing the draft contract.</p> <p>DMcA asked to be kept informed of the issues raised by DLS in relation to cyber security and data as it may impact on the work of the Innovation Implementation Group (IG) he jointly chairs and offered to help if necessary. DMcA highlighted the</p>	

	<p>need to share information and learning across IGs and considered this good practice.</p> <p>LM noted that her business holds Cyber Essentials Plus, which she said most organisations should have. It is the highest level of cyber security certification available to businesses. It was noted that CMcK and GT were not in attendance to discuss this matter. PT requested that the issue be progressed as a matter of urgency and indicated that discussions would continue outside this meeting.</p>	
5.	Chair's Update	
5.1	<p>FWF Update</p> <p>Real Living Wage (RLW)</p> <p>PT recapped the decision that implementation of the RLW for independent sector social care workers is not possible in the current 2025/26 financial year. He emphasised that the Department and Minister remain clear on the importance of RLW in stabilising the social care workforce but that the decision reflects the wider financial pressures facing the Department and the NI Executive.</p> <p>PT advised that there is currently no confirmed timescale for implementation, although the Minister has reiterated his commitment to progressing RLW at the earliest opportunity. The Minister has also corrected misreporting to the Health Committee regarding the extent to which RLW is already paid across the sector.</p> <p>PT reassured members that RLW remains a priority and that efforts to resolve and progress this issue continue. He advised members that the Minister met with IHCP representatives in November. It has since been agreed that the RLW Justification Report will be published on the DoH website soon.</p> <p>The FWF – Future Planning</p> <p>Members were updated on the forthcoming FWF meeting scheduled for Wednesday 4 February, which will focus on future priorities. While acknowledging disappointment regarding RLW, PT highlighted the significant work undertaken to complete the justification paper. The planned FWF meeting will consider future priorities, barriers, and</p>	

opportunities, with a summary of discussions/decisions to be reported to the SCCRB at the next meeting.

Roundtable Meetings

Homecare roundtable meetings have concluded, with outputs shared with the Sustainable System Building Implementation Group to progress further. PT made the connection with the work on the delegation of nursing tasks and, again, welcomed MFMcM’s substantive representation on the Board. PT emphasised the importance of nursing involvement on the Board and relevant Implementation Groups, and shared positive feedback about the roundtable discussions.

SDS roundtable meetings continue, with ongoing challenges around Managed Budgets and associated legal issues. Recent discussions have focused on challenges faced by SDS Leads across Trusts. EMcD confirmed further engagement is planned to share learning and progress with those involved in the original roundtable.

PT thanked all participants for their continued contribution to the roundtable work, confirming increasing SDS uptake in 2026/27 remains a key focus.

Strategic Plan and Delivery Plan

The Strategic Plan and Delivery Plans were submitted to Private Office on 20 October 2025 for Ministerial approval. Given the current financial position, the Plans are being considered alongside broader Departmental prioritisation and funding discussions.

This is expected to result in a more focused approach, prioritising those actions which are considered to be the most critical or potentially impactful, given current financial constraints. While significant changes to the Plans are not anticipated, there is a strong emphasis on prioritisation, in terms of delivery and on what can realistically be achieved.

PT outlined the purpose of the interim Planning Guidance which is expected to be circulated shortly. Following publication of that guidance, the SCCRB Strategic Plan and Delivery Plan will be finalised and made publicly available.

In response to a question from TR, EMcD confirmed key priorities reflected in the Planning Guidance are Homecare,

	<p>SDS, preventative support models, and maximising technology.</p> <p>AL sought reassurance that RLW continues to be considered, given the impact of financial constraints on services. PT reiterated the Minister’s commitment to RLW.</p> <p>Members were encouraged to continue establishing Implementation Groups, agreeing Terms of Reference, and identifying priority actions aligned to the Strategic and Delivery Plans.</p> <p>Neighbourhood Model</p> <p>PT updated members on the Neighbourhood Model of care as an approach to health and social care that focuses on delivering person-centred, preventative support at a local/ community level in Northern Ireland. There are plans to introduce up to 17 Neighbourhood Teams across NI. Engagement is ongoing with the Chief Pharmaceutical Officer, Cathy Harrison, and Gearóid Cassidy, the Director of Primary Care, both of whom are leading on the development of the model. PT welcomed Bernie Duffy to the meeting to provide an update on the model and enable the SCCRB to consider how it could support the delivery of the model.</p>	
6.	Integrated Neighborhood Teams	
6.1	<p>BD outlined the three programme phases in relation to the Neighbourhood Model of care:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design Phase – January 2026 • Build Phase – by April 2026 • Implementation Phase – from April 2026 <p>Following completion of stakeholder consultation and a call for evidence, findings are expected to be published in the next quarter.</p> <p>The operating model proposes the establishment of 17 Integrated Neighbourhood Teams (INTs) across NI, operating within GP Federation / AIPB footprints and implemented in waves during 2026/27.</p> <p>A mixed model of funding will be deployed, including mobilisation of existing HSC funding, invest-to-save opportunities, and external seed funding.</p>	

	<p>The Programme Board, chaired by Cathy Harrison and Gearóid Cassidy, is being established, with representation to be confirmed.</p> <p>Next steps include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publishing policy guidance and Year 1 priorities • Developing the funding model • Continued stakeholder engagement • Establishing governance structures • Supporting the rollout of INTs across NI <p>A discussion followed, including clarification on how INTs differ from MDTs, funding sustainability, involvement of the C&V sector, avoidance of unnecessary bureaucracy, role of social care, and consideration of unpaid carers.</p> <p>PT thanked BD and confirmed a further update would be provided at the March 2026 meeting.</p>	
	<p>ACTION (AP1-01-26) PMO to share BD’s slides on NI Neighbourhood Model of Care.</p>	<p>PMO</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p>SCCRB ToR</p>	
<p>7.1</p>	<p>PT referred members to Paper CRB3-1-26. Updates have been made to reflect delivery of the Strategic and Delivery Plans, including establishment of Implementation Groups and clarification regarding the role of the Co-Chair (now referred to as Deputy Chair).</p> <p>He reiterated that MFMcM was now a substantive member in her role as Deputy Chief Nursing Officer in DOH.</p> <p>PT explained that there were changes made to the ToR relating to decision-making and that this was in part relating to the decision by IHCP to pause their participation in reform activity as a result of the decision about the RLW. Members agreed that it was important for decisions to continue to be made by the Board and supported the changes to paragraph 20 of the ToR.</p> <p>A discussion took place about the absence of an Executive Director of Social Work following recent role changes. AM agreed to identify a suitable representative and report back.</p>	

	Members were asked to submit final comments on Terms of Reference by Tuesday 3 February. PMO to circulate finalised version thereafter.	
	ACTION (AP2-01-26) AM to identify a suitable Social Work Director to join the membership of SCCRB.	AM
	ACTION (AP3-01-26) Members to review ToR for SCCRB and forward any comments / amendments by Tuesday 3 February.	ALL Members
	ACTION (AP4-01-26) PMO to circulate final ToR version after Tuesday 3 February 2026.	PMO
8.	Implementation Groups (IG) ToR	
8.1	PT outlined updates to the IG ToR, including the revision of terminology ('service user' to 'people with care and support needs'). Additionally, 'co-chairs' have been replaced with 'joint chairs' in line with the changes to the Board arrangements and to reflect the joint and shared responsibility of the role. PT asked Joint Chairs to meet, finalise their IG ToR, and submit to PMO in preparation for delivery against the Strategic and Delivery Plans.	
	ACTION (AP5-01-26) PMO to circulate final IG ToR template reflecting the above changes.	PMO
	ACTION (AP6-01-26) Joint Chairs to agree their IG ToR and submit to PMO prior to the next SCCRB meeting i.e. Tuesday, 24 th March 2026.	All Members
	The Chair moved to agenda item 13 at this point [see below]	
9.	SCCRB – Reporting Structure going forward	
9.1	Due to time constraints, members were asked to review Paper CRB5-1-26 and submit comments 1 week from today.	
	ACTION (AP7-01-26) Members to provide comments on SCCRB Reporting Structure (paper CRB5-1-26) by COB, Tuesday 3 rd February 2026.	All Members
	ACTION (AP8-01-26) PMO to collate comments and, subject to comments received, issue an amended/final paper to members.	PMO
10.	SCCRB Communication and Engagement Plan	

10.1	<p>The September meeting discussed the outline of the new reform structures, which required a communications and engagement plan. Paper CRB6-1-26 was circulated in advance to members asking for their views and feedback. It sets out why a communication and engagement plan is necessary, including providing a timely messaging on the work of the Board, to encourage and facilitate participation and engagement, to share understanding and build confidence and trust in the process of reform.</p> <p>PPI responsibilities were noted and there was a suggestion that the plan also needed to include indicators of success from the perspective of those being engaged/communicated with. It was also suggested that some additional consideration of the engagement part of the plan was required.</p> <p>Members were invited to consider the stakeholder list, the general approach proposed and to assess the overall ambition of the Plan. It was noted that early launch would support awareness and engagement. Further refinement will follow member feedback, with engagement with the Press Office prior to proposed approval in March.</p> <p>The Importance of sharing impact and developments across Implementation Groups was reiterated.</p> <p>KT proposed that the primary and secondary stakeholder sections of the plan will need to be reviewed, as frontline workers are also represented by the Trade Unions, although it was pointed out that not all staff have union membership. Members to consider and comment as appropriate.</p>	
	ACTION (AP9-01-26) Members to submit comments on the Communication and Engagement Plan by COB, Tuesday 10 February 2026.	All Members
11.	SCCRB Risk Register	
11.1	PT asked Members to review Paper SCCRБ Risk Register (CRB7-1-26) and submit comments.	
	ACTION (AP10-01-26) Members to provide comments on the SCCRБ Risk Register by COB, Tuesday 3 rd February 2026.	All Members
12.	Growing a Brighter Future Together	

12.1	EMcD provided an overview of Paper CRB8-1-26, including an update on the work of the Casey Commission. PMO will continue to track the progress of the Casey Commission and provide updates as they are available.	
	ACTION (AP11-01-26) PMO to provide updates on the Casey Commission as available.	EMcD/PMO
13.	Engagement with People with Lived Experience	
13.1	UMcK summarised the PCC engagement platforms which support involvement of people with lived experience across multiple service areas. The importance of meaningful involvement alongside public engagement was noted. This approach ensures services are shaped, designed and evaluated by who the service impacts the most. Engagement platforms include Learning Disability , Mental Health, Care of Older People and Adult Safeguarding. PCC circulates a weekly newsletter to 3,000 of their members encouraging engagement and providing information. Platforms are influenced by what is happening with the sector and respond to matters such as the Muckamore Abbey Hospital Inquiry, Care Home Standards and Regional Mental Health Strategy. UMcK confirmed existing platforms can be accessed to consider other relevant areas of work, and membership is reviewed to ensure the right representation around the table. EMcD linked this work to the Engagement and Communication Plan, specifically the engagement aims of the plan. UMcK agreed to share the People to Partners report with members. A need to ensure people with care and support needs are involved at design stage was discussed. PCC would welcome engagement with NISCC. PT thanked UMcK for providing this overview.	
	ACTION (AP12-01-26) UMcK to circulate the People to Partners report.	UMcK
	ACTION (AP13-01-26) PCC to link with NISCC to consult on design and ensuring service user involvement.	PCC / TR

	The Chair moved back to item 10 at this point.	
14.	AOB	
14.1	EMcD updated members on the IMPACT SDS Project and encouraged member support, particularly across the Trusts. Copies of the project outline will be circulated by PMO for further reference.	
14.2	AL acknowledged the work of the PMO. PT echoed this and thanked all members and closed the meeting.	
	ACTION (AP14-01-26) PMO to circulate papers on IMPACT SDS project.	PMO
15.	Date of Next Meeting	
	The date of the next SCCRB is Tuesday, 24 th March 2026 at 10:30 in James House, 2 Cromac Avenue, BELFAST.	

ACTION LOG					
Date of Meeting	Action Point Ref	Page No. & Paragraph	Action	Action Owner	Status
27/01/2026	AP1 Jan 26	Page 7, Paragraph 6.1	PMO to share BD's slides on NI Neighborhood Model of Care.	PMO	Open
27/01/2026	AP2 Jan 26	Page 8, Paragraph 7.1	AM to identify a suitable Social Work Director to join the membership of SCCRB.	AM	Open
27/01/2026	AP3 Jan 26	Page 8, Paragraph 7.1	Members to review ToR for SCCRB and forward any comments / amendments by Tuesday 3 rd February 2026	Members	Open
27/01/2026	AP4 Jan 26	Page 8, Paragraph 7.1	PMO to circulate finalised ToR (with any amendments from Members) after Tuesday 3 rd February 2026	PMO	Open

27/01/2026	AP5 Jan 26	Page 8, Paragraph 8.1	PMO to circulate final IG ToR template reflecting changes to the wording & replacement of ' <i>service user</i> ' and ' <i>Co-chairs</i> '	PMO	Open
27/01/2026	AP6 Jan 26	Page 8, Paragraph 8.1	Joint Chairs to agree their IG ToR and submit to PMO prior to the next SCCRБ meeting i.e., Tuesday, 24 th March 2026.	Members	
27/01/2026	AP7 Jan 26	Page 8, Paragraph 9.1	Members to provide comments on SCCRБ Reporting Structure (paper CRB5-1-26) by COB, Tuesday 3 rd February 2026.	Members	Open
27/01/2026	AP8 Jan 26	Page 8, Paragraph 9.1	PMO to collate comments on SCCRБ Reporting Structure and issue an amended paper to members.	PMO	Open
27/01/2026	AP9 Jan 26	Page 9, Paragraph 10.1	Members to submit comments on the Communication and Engagement Plan by COB, Tuesday 10 February 2026.	Members	Open
27/01/2026	AP10 Jan 26	Page 9, Paragraph 11.1	Members to provide comments on the SCCRБ Risk Register by COB, Tuesday 3 February 2026.	Members	Open
27/01/2026	AP11 Jan 26	Page 10, Paragraph 12.1	EMcD/PMO to provide updates on the Casey Commission as available.	EMcD & PMO	Open

27/01/2026	AP12 Jan 26	Page 11, Paragraph 13.1	UMcK to circulate the People to Partners Report.	UMcK	Open
27/01/2026	AP13 Jan 26	Page 11, Paragraph 13.1	PCC to link with NISCC to consult on design and ensuring service user involvement.	PCC/TR(NISCC)	Open
27/01/2026	AP14 Jan 26	Page 11, Paragraph 14.1	PMO to circulate papers on IMPACT SDS project.	PMO	Open
RECORD OF 'OPEN ACTIONS' FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS					
30/09/2025	AP3- Sept25	Page 4, Paragraph 6.1	SPPG to share contract and commission specification with OSS.	SPPG	To be updated at next meeting.

PMO Office
28/01/2026