



**Belfast Health and
Social Care Trust**
caring supporting improving together

Chief Executive
Dr Cathy Jack

Chairman
Mr Peter McNaney, CBE

17 August 2022

BY EMAIL - peter.may@health-ni.gov.uk

Mr Peter May
Permanent Secretary

Dear Peter

3. Executive Director of Social Work

My current Executive Director of Social Work and Children's Community Services is due to retire imminently. I had previously discussed with your predecessor, Richard Pengelly, my concern about the ability of the Ex Director of Social Work to also provide assurance for CCS given that this is a service that they are also operationally responsible for. In my view these two elements need to be split for good governance.

I would want Ray Jones' review to complete before finally deciding on the best alignment for CCS with another service, or to receive clarity if CCS are to be separately managed regionally. I think that many of the challenges in CCS are similar to those in Intellectual Disability, and so my current thinking would be to separate the Executive Director of SW from CCS and to couple the Director of CCS with ID. I think the abilities of the Executive Director of SW to focus on executive functions have historically been diverted by having a large service portfolio, and that Adult Safeguarding, development of SW assurance and professional development has suffered as a consequence. I believe that an Adult Safeguarding Champion should automatically be the Executive Director of SW. I must make clear, however, that the views I am expressing do not in any way reflect on the high-quality leadership and determined commitment of the current Executive Director of SW and CCS who has carried the two portfolios and admirably balanced their competing demands. I have recruited an interim Executive Director of SW and an interim Director of CCS. It is vital that I am able to make a strong appointment of a stand-alone Executive Director of SW. I would value discussion with your Professional leads in the DoH about this very important matter. I understand from Peter McNaney that he believes Paul Martin, the Chair of NISC, could make a valuable contribution to consideration of this issue and I would be happy to also engage him in the recruitment process.