



FAO Chair BASW England
37 Wellesley House
Waterloo Court
Waterloo Street
Birmingham
B2 5PP

Wednesday 5 June 2019

Dear Andy, Anna and Janet

Thank you for your letter of 9 May outlining your concerns in relation to the non-executive appointments to the board of Social Work England. We understand you have also written to the Secretaries of State for Health and Social Care and Education.

As you are aware Social Work England was established to be a modern and effective specialist regulator that takes a flexible and proportionate approach to regulation. Unlike other professional regulators it is governed by a board made up of executive and non-executive members. The non-executive members have been recruited through the HM Public Appointments process and appointed by the Secretary of State. They were selected on merit and background to reflect a breadth of professional disciplines needed to build our organisation from the ground up. This is a different construct to the governance of many other regulators, which take the form of a council.

A core part of the work of Social Work England, as the specialist regulator for social workers, is to ensure that social workers, those who are involved in the education and training of social workers, and those who have experience of social work services, are directly involved in the discussions and decisions of the organisation. We have been clear about our commitment to this from the earliest stage of our development. We will continue to ensure that early dialogue and collaboration with the sector we will regulate remains central to our work.

To support us in this we have established a professional expert group and an experts by experience group who have provided advice, support and challenge, particularly through the development of our draft standards and rules. These groups have been an essential and valued part of our team, and we are grateful for your contribution as part of the former.

Between February and May this year we completed a substantial engagement process with the wider social work sector through the consultation on our draft standards and rules. This included an online survey, six national events, two events for people with lived experience including adults, children and young people, and six live Q&A sessions on Twitter.

In addition, we are currently establishing our team of Regional Engagement Leads. We have appointed six of the eight posts and they will be taking up their roles in July. We are continuing to recruit the two remaining posts and a Head of Strategic Engagement to run the team. All of the regional engagement lead posts will be filled by qualified, registered and experienced social workers.

We acknowledge your concerns in relation to the make up of the board and are very happy to discuss the matter further with you. To this end Social Work England would like to invite you to attend the board meeting in Sheffield on 26 July 2019 or in London on 6 September to meet the members of the board and consider how we might move forward.



Professor The Lord Patel of Bradford OBE
Chair



Colum Conway
Chief Executive