

<b>Title of report</b>	Audit and Assurance Committee Report to Council
<b>Public/Confidential</b>	Public
<b>Summary/purpose of report</b>	To make recommendations from the Audit and Assurance Committee.
<b>Recommendations</b>	<p>The Committee recommends that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. the Council accepts that the assurance report presents a true and fair view of the SSSC's performance towards achievement of strategic objectives, financial management and risk identification and management. In particular that: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. operational performance as measured by strategic key performance indicators give confidence that the SSSC was delivering as forecasted to meet its strategic objectives as agreed with the Sponsor Department</li> <li>b. financial performance was consistent with forecasted spend and presents no cause for concern relating to year-end outturn of approved budget</li> <li>c. operational delivery and financial expenditure were consistent</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. the Council takes sufficient assurances from the internal audit reports, the follow up review and the internal/external audit tracker</li> <li>3. the Council approves the Annual Report of the Committee to Council</li> <li>4. the Council notes <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. the assurance map and the future process</li> <li>b. the Committee approved the Draft Annual Governance Statement for inclusion within the Annual Report and Accounts</li> <li>c. the Committee took assurances that there were no instances of fraud or corruption detected in the financial year 2021/22.</li> </ol> </li> </ol>

<b>Author</b>	Alan Baird, Chair, Audit and Assurance Committee
<b>Responsible Officer</b>	Lorraine Gray, Chief Executive
<b>Link to Strategic Plan</b>	<p>The information in this report links to:</p> <p>Outcome 1: People who use services are protected by ensuring the regulated workforce is fit to practise.</p> <p>Outcome 2: The SSSC supports and enhances the development of the registered workforce to deliver high standards of practice and drive improvement.</p> <p>Outcome 3: Our workforce planning activities support employers, commissioners and policy makers to deliver a sustainable, integrated and innovative workforce.</p> <p>Outcome 4: The social work, social care and early years workforce is recognised as professional and regulated and valued for the difference it makes to people's lives.</p>
<b>Link to Risk Register</b>	Risk 3: We fail to meet corporate governance, external scrutiny and legal obligations.
<b>Impact assessments</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. An Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) was not required.</li> <li>2. A Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) was not required.</li> <li>3. A Sustainability Impact Assessment (SIA) was not required.</li> </ol>
<b>Documents attached</b>	<p>Appendix 1: Assurance report as at 31 March 2022 including the Strategic Risk Register</p> <p>Appendix 2: Draft minutes of the Audit and Assurance Committee meeting of 03 May 2022.</p>
<b>Background papers</b>	None

## INTRODUCTION

1. As set out in the Executive Framework Document and Scheme of Delegation, accountability for strategic oversight remains with the SSSC Council and the responsibility for oversight and scrutiny of achievement of operational key performance indicators, monitoring of Financial Performance and Strategic Risk Management is delegated from the SSSC Council to the Audit and Assurance Committee.
2. This report records the recommendations of the Audit and Assurance Committee to SSSC Council following the Audit and Assurance Committee meeting of 3 May 2022.

## ASSURANCE REPORT

3. The Audit and Assurance Committee of 3 May 2022 reviewed the assurance report relating to the activities of the SSSC. Appendix 1 to this report is a copy of the assurance report as at 31 March 2022 which Committee considered. Appendix 2 is the unconfirmed minutes of the meeting, to satisfy Council that the Committee has discharged its responsibilities. The Committee highlights the areas below.
4. There were changes to the Risk Register, two risks were deleted:
  - we fail to plan and resource our activities to deliver our digital strategy
  - the SSSC is unable to operate due to effects of global pandemic COVID-19.

One risk was added:

- we fail to have the appropriate measures in place to protect against cyber security attacks.
5. Lynn Murray confirmed that the underspend at 31 March was correctly stated in the narrative of the report as £2,308k.

## INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL AUDIT

6. Members were presented with the following:  
**Annual report 2021/22**
7. This summarised the work of the internal auditors over the year. They reported there had been no significant internal control weaknesses and procedures were working well in the areas audited.  
**Budgetary Control Internal Audit**
8. This report provided Committee with a good level of assurance with no management actions recommended.

### **Data Protection**

9. This report provided Committee with a good level of assurance and no formal recommended actions. There were two suggestions on actions which would enhance current procedures.

### **Follow up reviews**

10. Members were presented with the auditors' annual follow up review with an updated action plan. The plan showed that management had fully implemented five actions and there was one ongoing action, partially implemented, with a revised completion date agreed by Committee. There were no other outstanding internal audit actions as of the end of March 2022.

### **Internal/external audit action tracker**

11. Members were presented with an up-to-date extract from the internal/external audit tracker maintained by the corporate governance team. Actions recommended by the external auditors were in progress and had revised deadline dates agreed, as did the actions arising from the recent internal audit report on HR data and performance management.
12. The Committee took assurance from the reports of the internal auditors, and the tracker. These demonstrated that internal controls were working well, that where management actions were required, these were being actioned. This included, where necessary, extensions to completion dates being sought. Committee monitored actions and approved these extensions.

## **FRAUD AND CORRUPTION ASSURANCE REPORT**

13. The Committee received a report from management indicating that no instances of fraud had been detected in the 2021/22 financial year. Members were also presented with details of recent fraud cases identified by Audit Scotland. Russell Pettigrew advised that he and Lynn Murray would participate in a fraud awareness live broadcast to staff.
14. The Committee took assurances that there were no instances of fraud or corruption detected.

## **DRAFT ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT**

15. Committee approved and took assurances from the draft annual governance statement and the Certificates of Assurance from each director. The governance statement will be included within the Annual Report and Accounts.

## **DRAFT ANNUAL AUDIT AND ASSURANCE COMMITTEE REPORT TO COUNCIL**

16. Committee approved the draft of the Committee's Annual Report to Council on the work of the Committee over the financial year 2021/22.

### **ASSURANCE MAP**

17. The Committee reviewed and approved the Assurance Map, which officers had populated.
18. The Committee took assurance from the process now set up which included an annual report to Committee.

### **CONSULTATION**

19. No specific stakeholder engagement was necessary in the preparation of this report.

### **RISKS**

20. We have an averse risk appetite to governance matters. This report gives assurances to Council that the Committee is carrying out its remit.

### **IMPLICATIONS**

#### **Resourcing**

21. There are no resource implications arising from this report.

#### **Compliance**

22. There are no compliance implications arising from this report.

### **IMPACT ASSESSMENTS**

#### **Equalities**

23. An EIA is not necessary as this report relates to internal governance matters. It is not therefore a new proposal and has no impact on people with protected characteristics.

### **CONCLUSION**

24. This report gives assurances to Council that the Audit and Assurance Committee is carrying out its remit in accordance with the terms of reference contained in the Code of Corporate Governance. The report makes recommendations to Council on matters requiring Council approval.