

<b>Title of report</b>	Chief Executive's Report
<b>Public/Confidential</b>	Public
<b>Summary/purpose of report</b>	To provide Council Members with an update from the Chief Executive.
<b>Recommendations</b>	The Council is asked to note the information contained in the report and offer comment on the content.
<b>Author and 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>	<p>Risk 1: We fail to ensure that our system of regulation meets the needs of people who use services and workers.</p> <p>Risk 2: We fail to ensure that our workforce development function supports the workforce and employers to achieve the rights standards and qualifications to gain and maintain registration.</p> <p>Risk 3: We fail to meet corporate governance, external scrutiny and legal obligations.</p>

	<p>Risk 4: We fail to provide value to stakeholders and demonstrate our impact.</p> <p>Risk 5: We fail to develop and support SSSC staff appropriately to ensure we have a motivated and skilled workforce or have insufficient staff resources to achieve our strategic outcomes.</p> <p>Risk 6: The SSSC fails to secure sufficient budget resources to fulfil the financial plans required to deliver the strategic plan.</p> <p>Risk 7: Business Continuity Plans (BCP) are in place and tested.</p> <p>Risk 8: We fail to have the appropriate measures in place to protect against cyber security attacks.</p>
<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>	None
<b>Background papers</b>	None

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

1. As set out in the Executive Framework Document agreed by Scottish Government and the SSSC, the Chief Executive is accountable for the operational performance of the SSSC and responsible for organisational governance. This report provides an assessment of performance, highlights important information that has happened since the last Council meeting on 28 February 2022, and looks forward to emerging issues.

### **OUTCOME 1: PEOPLE WHO USE SERVICES ARE PROTECTED BY ENSURING THE REGULATED WORKFORCE IS FIT TO PRACTISE**

2. We continue to support the sector by hosting a recruitment portal for both early years and adult social care. We are also ready to expand this work, if required by Scottish Government, as part of the response to the situation in Ukraine.
3. We are also continuing to monitor Scottish Government's application fee waiver trial, which is due to end in June. As part of this we are surveying employers for their feedback on how successful they have found it to encourage more people to work in the sector.
4. Members will recall that in the early stages of the pandemic we paused the process of requesting confirmation of completed qualifications. We have now re-started this process and at the point of renewing registration we will ask workers to update us on their progress and plans for completion. D365 has been developed by our Systems Development Team to help automate some of the processes that support this work. The ability to do this work in-house has avoided supplier costs of almost £25k.
5. The Registration Department have piloted an Investigator Pathway to support interested staff to develop the skills needed for this role. The first candidate has successfully secured an Investigator position and we are now working on Pathways for other roles.
6. The Registration Department's Scottish Vocational Qualifications centre has completed two positive external verification assessments. "You are operating really robust quality assurance procedures and systems which are presented in well written policies and documentation. This is ensuring that candidates receive a well informed and supported experience whilst undertaking Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) qualifications, which was evidenced in the conversations I had with two of your current candidates after our meeting."
7. Following the successful General Teaching Council Scotland judgment against Police Scotland, we have met with Police Scotland and they are now developing processes to release information to us. It is still early days but we have successfully obtained information without a court order in some cases.

8. We have launched improved referral guidance and an Employer Advice Line to help ensure we receive the right referrals. As part of this we have been engaging with the sector, carrying out 22 events with larger employers. We have also launched a support line for workers' wellbeing, offering telephone support and counselling as well as online resources for workers involved in the fitness to practise process. The intention is to expand phonenumber support both in terms of the nature, and those eligible to access it.
9. We have now held two meetings of a Fitness to Practise Representative's Group. This group's purpose is to provide a regulator forum for unions and legal representatives to highlight any issues and help us to resolve issues and improve the experience of workers and others involved with the process.

## **OUTCOME 2: THE SSSC SUPPORTS AND ENHANCES THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE REGULATED WORKFORCE TO DELIVER HIGH STANDARDS OF PRACTICE AND DRIVE IMPROVEMENT**

10. We are working in partnership with Skills Development Scotland and Scottish Government to develop a Graduate Apprenticeship for Social Work.
11. Scottish Government has made the commitment that the supported first year in practice for newly qualified social workers will become mandatory in Scotland. We continue to support roll out in ten early implementation sites with a fuller roll-out anticipated later this year.
12. SQA accreditation have submitted a recommendation to the National Occupational Standards Governance group recommending the National Occupational Standards (NOS), and thereafter the Social Services and Health SVQs, should be reviewed within the next three years. In partnership with the other UK sector skills councils, as part of Skills for Care and Development, we collectively have the responsibility to maintain these NOS and will work in partnership to review the NOS.
13. Development of the integrated health and social care award continues. We have held a series of engagement events to scope the requirements and have established a working group with representatives from the sector to take forward the content development.
14. We have refreshed our Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) resource to help workers understand how they can gain recognition of their previous learning towards their registration qualification requirements.
15. We have published a new research report on newly qualified social workers' experiences of practice during the COVID-19 pandemic in Scotland.

16. We developed a new web page to support continuous professional learning (CPL). This page highlights national learning frameworks and programmes that the SSSC endorses and registrants can use towards their CPL.

### **OUTCOME 3: OUR WORKFORCE PLANNING ACTIVITIES SUPPORT EMPLOYERS, COMMISSIONERS AND POLICY MAKERS TO DELIVER A SUSTAINABLE AND INTEGRATED AND INNOVATIVE WORKFORCE**

17. We have undertaken system developments to MySSSC to support the delivery of the College Development Network's 'Introduction to career in care' programme to link students directly with local employers and vacancies. As of April, employers have shared 80 employment opportunities.
18. We have launched a Scottish Social Services Workforce Planning Network with now over 50 members from across Public, Third and Independent sectors. Over 30 participants engaged in our first Workforce Planning webinar and we will deliver further webinars on a quarterly basis.
19. We are collaborating with the Scottish Refugee Council and the Armed Forces Service Leavers and Veterans Programme to support recruitment of refugees, asylum seekers and armed forces service leavers into social care.
20. Our Social Service Workforce Data and Planning Group is meeting monthly to ensure the workforce data collection, analysis and reporting collected for social services is produced in a manner that assists employers with workforce planning and development and provides other users and stakeholders with useful information, data and analysis about the social services workforce. We currently have almost 30 people on the membership list with representation from across Government and key stakeholders including Social Work Scotland, COSLA, Coalition of Care and Support Providers in Scotland, Scottish Care and NHS Education for Scotland. The group is currently reviewing the data landscape of all social service workforce data and engaging with data users to review the usefulness of existing social service workforce data, and to develop a plan for change.
21. We have published the latest interactive social worker data tool which provides time series data on practising social workers (PSWs) over the last 10 years by local authority. The data include, headcount, Whole Time Equivalent (WTE) and headcount and WTE by relevant population and can also be broken down by the four different types of fieldwork teams, and whether the PSWs are full time or part-time or main grade social workers or senior social workers.

## **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**

22. We launched our new campaign to promote the work we do to support careers in care. There was a special edition of SSSC News with targeted content for workers in adult services, workers in children's services, social workers and employers. We are also running sponsored social media posts targeting people across Scotland with an interest in social care and directing them to our careers in care website. These are running on Facebook and LinkedIn.
23. We continue to drive Fair Work with our involvement in effective voice work stream. We are planning the delivery of engagement workshops and surveys with workforce groups and we will recruit a full time, fixed term appointment to support the first phase of implementation of the nine effective voice standards.

## **HIGH PERFORMING ORGANISATION**

24. We heard officially in March that we achieved the gold Investors in People accreditation for the first time, having retained silver for several years. The report identifies our overriding strength as caring about our people and being ambitious to do even more for them. The elements that contributed most to us being a gold employer include:
  - staff members are proud of the work that they do, believe their role is important in our sector and feel very valued and appreciated
  - introducing a People Strategy shows our internal as well as external focus
  - strong communication and engagement with staff and we involve them in the development of our Strategic Plan, day to day work and listen to their views and ideas about improvement with staff having a clear understanding of our vision and strategic outcomes
  - truly values driven organisation, having revised and refreshed our values, staff behave in line with our culture and values and we recruit to our values
  - embracing change and continuing to work at home supporting our customers and providing a high level of service during the pandemic
  - positive feedback from staff on the learning and development opportunities available, well planned and structured induction programme and performance review process and the immense emphasis on supporting their health and wellbeing
  - social media offerings have led to greater visibility of our organisation.
25. The report recommends that we work towards meeting the We Invest in Wellbeing Standard in 2022 as well as:
  - continuing with management training for our managers, developing a

Talent Management Strategy and continuing to work on our Succession Plan

- developing and enhancing our work on the return on investment on learning and development
  - introducing a 360° feedback process for all our managers
  - measuring the positive impact on our Corporate Social Responsibility work.
26. We will include improvement actions in the People Strategy Delivery Plan, which we will present to Council in August. We will also develop improvement plans at departmental and directorate level.
27. In February the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Group considered several areas including a review of our progress against the Minority Ethnic Recruitment Toolkit and a proposal to promote Unconscious Bias Training for staff. We're working with colleagues across the SSSC and the Council for Minority Ethnic Voluntary Organisations (CEMVO) to explore how we can improve our recruitment information. We have also shared information with colleagues from the Scottish Government's Children and Families Directorate about our approach to considering wider areas (such as children's rights) within our Equality Impact Assessment process.
28. We recently submitted information on the 2021-22 pay remit to Scottish Government Pay Policy Unit. We need its permission before we can begin pay remit negotiations with Unison.
29. We continue to progress discussions with Scottish Government and the other tenants in Compass/Quadrant House ie Care Inspectorate and OSCR, before Scottish Ministers can finalise lease negotiations with the landlord.

## HORIZON SCANNING

30. **National Care Service (NCS):** The NCS will be up and running by the end of the Parliamentary session. We are waiting for further advice from Scottish Government on the next steps. The SSSC is involved in a number of stakeholder groups planning for the future.
31. **Early Learning and Childcare (ELC):** The Scottish Government is focusing on expanding funded ELC for children aged one and two, starting with low-income households during this Parliament. This summer the Scottish Government will publish a strategic plan setting out its proposed approach to delivering on its ELC commitments.
32. **Education Reform:** Professor Muir's report was published in March and states that 'as a matter of urgency, the new independent inspectorate should re-engage with the Care Inspectorate to agree a shared inspection framework designed to reduce the burden on ELC practitioners and centres.' The Scottish Government agrees that a shared framework for the inspection of ELC would be positive and will consult the sector before

the summer. The consultation will sit alongside work on the development of the new education inspectorate.

33. **The Promise:** In March the Scottish Government published its implementation plan for the Promise. The implementation plan confirms that the focus is to deliver on the priorities in the Promise's Plan 21-24 document. The implementation plan refers to the review of the Codes of Practice and wider work involving the SSSC around supporting Relationship Based Practice.
34. **Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry:** The Inquiry has started to hear evidence relating to Phase 7 of its investigations into the abuse of children in foster care. The Director of Regulation attended the Inquiry to give evidence relevant to the role of the SSSC.
35. **National Strategy for Community Justice:** In April the Scottish Government began a consultation on [the revision of the National Strategy for Community Justice](#). Priority areas for the strategy include strengthening leadership, engagement and partnership working, and ensuring that the local community and workforce has an improved understanding of and confidence in community justice.
36. **Incorporating the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) into Scots law:** The Scottish Government is considering the implications following a Supreme Court ruling in 2021. The Government remains committed to the incorporation of the UNCRC into Scots law to the maximum extent possible as soon as practicable.

## CONSULTATION

37. Internal stakeholders have contributed to this report. This report also provides information on how we are working with partners and stakeholders to support the sector at this time.

## IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

38. Impact assessments for equalities, data protection and sustainability are not required.

## CONCLUSION

39. This report provides Council Members with updates of matters of strategic importance and demonstrates how we are working to fulfil our statutory obligations during this time.