

<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.
<b>Author and Responsible Officer</b>	Maree Allison, Interim Chief Executive
<b>Link to Strategic Plan</b>	<p>The information in this report links to:</p> <p>Outcome 1: <b>Trusted</b> People who use services are protected by a workforce that is fit to practise.</p> <p>Outcome 2: <b>Skilled</b> Our work supports the workforce to deliver high standards of professional practice.</p> <p>Outcome 3: <b>Confident</b> Our work enhances the confidence, competence and wellbeing of the workforce.</p> <p>Outcome 4: <b>Valued</b> The social work, social care and children and young people workforce is 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 right 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 required to deliver the strategic plan.</p> <p>Risk 7: Closed.</p> <p>Risk 8: We fail to have the appropriate measures in place to protect against cyber security attacks.</p> <p>Risk 9: Closed.</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

## INTRODUCTION

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 full Council meeting on 23 November 2023, and looks forward to emerging issues.

## KEY POINTS

2. We have been awarded Investors in Young People silver accreditation and our interim Investors in People assessment concluded we are still on track to maintain our gold accreditation. Both reports have been shared with Council Members. Actions will be taken forward in the next People Strategy which will come to Council for approval in August 2024.
3. The Convener and I met with the Minister on 6 February. This was a constructive meeting where we discussed the financial sustainability of the organisation, reviewing registration fees and the challenge of qualifying the workforce.
4. The Future Proofing Programme is moving into its final phase with the aim of implementation of the changes in May and June. Our communications over the next four months will focus on ensuring the workforce and employers are ready for the changes.
5. The Alliance meeting of social work and social care regulators and workforce bodies took place in Edinburgh in January. This is an important forum for sharing developments and challenges across the UK and Republic of Ireland. We are leading joint work with colleagues in Wales and Northern Ireland on the review of the National Occupational Standards.

**OUTCOME 1: Trusted** people who use services are protected by a workforce that is fit to practise.

6. We published our first Fitness to Practise Snapshot report on 31 January 2024. This is a new report providing data from Fitness to Practise and gives a unique insight into the SSSC's role in protecting the public by ensuring the registered workforce is trusted, skilled and fit to practise. It is available on our website <https://data.sssc.uk.com/data-publications/344-fitness-to-practise-report>. This follows on from our first SSSC Register report which we published on 1 September 2023.
7. The research project 'Witness to Harm, holding to account', led by the Open University with support from Manchester Metropolitan University and

the Universities of Glasgow, Edinburgh and Oxford has now concluded. The first dissemination event took place in Dundee on 17 January, and the second in London on 1 February at which the project's findings and recommendations were presented. We attended both events. The research team are now developing a suite of resources that will be available to all involved regulators, and our workforces, to improve the offering of support available to witnesses involved at all stages of the fitness to practise process. We have been working on improving the support we provide over the past couple of years and will continue to make further improvements based on the recommendations from the research.

**OUTCOME 2: Skilled** Our work supports the workforce to deliver high standards of professional practice.

8. With partners in NHS Education Scotland (NES) and Health Improvement Scotland (HiS), we have further developed and promoted [the Preventing Infection in Social Care Settings app](#)
9. We presented a paper to the Joint Social Services Taskforce setting out proposed options which could help improve workforce experience and providing key data and intelligence from the Register to inform the discussion.
10. We have been working closely with NES and the Care Inspectorate (CI) to significantly increase the number of MyLearning QR codes being incorporated into their respective learning materials to improve user experience of maintaining records of learning to meet their Continuous Professional Learning (CPL) requirements.
11. The formal consultation on the new health and social care Integrated Award closed on 31 January 2024. The results are being analysed and will inform any final revision of the content prior to submission for approval in summer 2024.
12. We continue to participate in the national Dementia Strategy Delivery Group and development of the Draft Delivery plan for the new dementia strategy for Scotland. We held a dementia ambassador /champion webinar on 6 December 2023 and are planning the next one on 20 March 2024 with NES colleagues around feedback on and developing new Promoting Excellence resources.

**OUTCOME 3: Confident** Our work enhances the confidence, competence, and wellbeing of the workforce.

13. We have commissioned research through Abertay University and University of St. Andrews on how the social services workforce can support vulnerable people to build cyber resilience.

14. The refresh and migration of the Early Learning in Childcare (ELC) National CPL Directory and modules for the Children and Young People's workforce to the SSSC Learning Zone has now concluded. Ministerial launch is planned for later in February.
15. I attended an Audit Scotland roundtable meeting on 15 February, discussing the challenges facing the adult social care workforce. This was to inform Audit Scotland's future work in this area.

**OUTCOME 4: Valued** The social work, social care and children and young people workforce is valued for the difference it makes to people's lives.

16. In partnership with the Skills for Care and Development partners we have commissioned Alama to undertake research into the Economic and Social Value of Adult Social Care in the UK. The research will look at the UK as a whole and also each of the four countries separately. The research is due to conclude in June 2024.
17. By the end of March 2024 we will publish a report on the in and outflows to the social work workforce. This will inform national workforce planning and Scottish Government planning for the National Social Work Agency.
18. We have published our annual staff vacancies in care services report, <https://data.sssc.uk.com/data-publications/30-vacancy-reports/331-the-2022-staff-vacancies-in-care-services-report> and our six-monthly social worker filled posts and vacancies report <https://data.sssc.uk.com/data-publications/337-social-worker-filled-posts-and-vacancies-six-monthly-survey>

## **STRONG SUSTAINABLE ORGANISATION**

19. Blake Stevenson have been commissioned to undertake research using our registration equalities data. The final report will highlight the make-up of the sector by protected characteristics and provide more detailed analysis and assumptions based on the data. We have been sharing our progress with the other UK Regulators and plan to develop further research to gather a UK wide picture.
20. Our Registrant Survey results have recently been analysed and an action plan is being developed. We have seen increased positive responses around several areas of the SSSCs work, against the previous year. The results are published as part of the Annual Report and Accounts. We will present an overview of several stakeholder surveys to Council in the summer as part of the development calendar.

## HORIZON SCANNING

21. **National Care Service Bill:** In January 2024 the Stage 1 deadline was further extended to 1 March 2024. The Health, Social Care and Sport Committee is currently considering a draft Stage 1 report. Work to develop the structure of the National Social Work Agency progresses.
22. **Independent Review of Scrutiny and Regulation of Adult Social Care (IRISR):** We await the Scottish Government's response to the review.
23. **The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024:** The Act received royal assent in January. The Scottish Government is due to consult on the draft statutory guidance on reporting and the compatibility duty ahead of the commencement of the provisions in July 2024.
24. **ELC and School Age Childcare:** We are waiting for the Scottish Government to publish the Strategic Framework for Scotland's Early Learning and School Age Childcare Profession. The Scottish Government has indicated that the framework will be published in 2024.
25. **Scottish Child Abuse Inquiry:** The public hearings for Phase 9 of the inquiry's investigations cover the provision of residential care in establishments for children and young people with long term healthcare needs, additional support needs and disabilities. These hearings are expected to commence in spring 2025.
26. **Scottish Covid-19 Inquiry:** The Scottish Covid-19 Inquiry began its first impact hearings looking at health and social care, in October 2023. In December, hearings were paused to allow for the UK Covid-19 Inquiry to begin its Core UK decision-making and political governance – Scotland (Module 2A) hearings in January. They will resume on Tuesday 12 March.

## CONSULTATION

27. 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.

## IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

28. Impact assessments for equalities, data protection and sustainability were not required.

## **CONCLUSION**

29. 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.