

Title of report	Convener's Report
Summary/purpose of report	Update on the Convener's activity since the last Council meeting on 23 November 2023
Recommendations	The Council is asked to note the summary of recent key issues and activities from the viewpoint of the Convener.
Author	Sandra Campbell, Convener
Responsible Officer	Maree Allison, Interim Chief Executive
Link to Strategic Plan	<p>The information in this report links to:</p> <p>Outcome 1: Trusted People who use services are protected by a workforce that is fit to practise.</p> <p>Outcome 2: Skilled Our work supports the workforce to deliver high standards of professional practice.</p> <p>Outcome 3: Confident Our work enhances the confidence, competence and wellbeing of the workforce.</p> <p>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.</p>
Link to Risk Register	<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 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>
Impact assessments	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. An Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) was not required. 2. A Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) was not required. 3. A Sustainability Impact Assessment (SIA) was not required.
Documents attached	None
Background papers	None

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This report covers the Convener's activities for the period from the last full Council meeting on 23 November 2023.

INTRODUCTION

2. As usual the period leading up to the Christmas break was relatively quiet and adverse weather this winter season also impacted on my ability to attend face to face meetings, which is particularly regrettable in relation to the annual Away Days for the Council and also the meeting with the Minister for Children, Young People and Keeping the Promise, both of which I will cover in this report.

MEETINGS WITH PARTNER AGENCIES

3. I have continued to attend meetings of the Care Inspectorate. During this period there was one Board Development event on 30 November, which was held at the National Christian Outreach Centre in Perth. The informal setting facilitated discussions between Board Members, Senior Managers and other staff in a more facilitative way and we had productive sharing of views around the strategic work of the Care Inspectorate and current challenges.
4. The planned joint meeting of the Care Inspectorate Board and the SSSC Council was unfortunately cancelled by mutual agreement shortly before the planned date, again due to adverse weather, but there was a meeting held on 10 January to plan the agenda before the decision was taken to postpone the event and from this it is clear that there is merit in seeking to establish another date, particularly once the Scottish Government's response to the Independent Review of Inspection, Scrutiny and Regulation has been published.
5. I also attended a Board meeting of the Care Inspectorate on 8 February by Teams.
6. The established quarterly meeting with NHS Education for Scotland (NES) took place on 27 November 2023, focused around our progress around our joint delivery plan, the Adult Social Care Skills response plan and horizon scanning for 2024/25.

MEETINGS WITH THE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT

7. Regular meetings have continued with Iona Colvin, the Chief Social Work Adviser, particularly in the light of challenges for the SSSC arising from

the current budget challenges looking forward. A meeting was arranged with the Minister for Children, Young People and Keeping the Promise. This was planned to be an in-person meeting in Edinburgh but again the weather made it impossible to travel to Edinburgh on the agreed date of 6 February, however this was a productive and useful meeting, enabling the Interim Chief Executive and myself to raise a number of issues with the Minister, the key issue being the debate which had taken place at a Council meeting about how to take forward the consultation with SSSC registrants regarding a proposed increase in registration fees. The Minister confirmed that she was content for that consultation to go ahead, whilst recognising the challenges that this may present. One of these being the continuing arrangement whereby some registrants fund their registration fee for themselves, whilst others are funded by their employers. This will now be discussed again with Council Members at the February Council meeting.

8. We took the opportunity to brief the Minister on concerns around the progress in achieving targets for qualification in the adult social care workforce.
9. The Minister thanked us for the meeting and suggested holding another meeting later in 2024.

COUNCIL MEMBERS

10. Further to my last report, we were joined by two new Council Members, Edel Harris and Sharon Ballingall. Both were able to take part in some of the Development Day sessions in December 2023 and have observed an Audit and Assurance Committee meeting. They both bring a wealth of experience to the Council and are also keen to become involved in future visits to services this year.
11. The Annual Development days were held on 7 and 8 December 2023 in the SSSC offices and were useful and productive despite the fact that the weather once again precluded me travelling from the Highlands. I am now considering the appropriate timing of the event.
12. I will be following up with our Sponsor the need to plan ahead for the recruitment of two Council Members later this year when Alan Baird and Theresa Allison complete their second terms.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE POST

13. I would like to recognise the formal retirement of our Chief Executive, Lorraine Gray in January. As you will know Lorraine led the SSSC for many years, raising the profile of our organisation and providing leadership

through a time of considerable change. Lorraine had strong links with the SSSC staff workforce and will be missed.

14. I would also like to thank Maree Allison for stepping up during this time and continuing to be Interim Chief Executive whilst providing stability and support to our workforce. I am now at the start of a process of recruitment for a permanent Chief Executive and will keep Members apprised of the process and progress over the next few months.

CONCLUSION

15. I am looking forward to the spring and a new year for our organisation, one which may bring some change and challenges but also one in which we can continue to demonstrate the contribution that we continue to make.