![Scottish Social Services Council logo]

Title of report	Assurance Report as of 31 March 2023
Public/Confidential	Public
Summary/purpose of report	To provide performance, financial and risk information which: • assesses delivery of our strategy through the analysis of strategic performance indicators • highlights areas of concern • identifies corrective action required. The report identifies variance to expected performance and any impact or risk this may have on the strategic objective to which the KPI relates. Actuals are measured against an initial forecast with the KPI owner providing an explanation for variance. If there are negative variances the KPI owner details corrective actions.
Recommendations	Audit and Assurance Committee is asked to: 1. endorse the direction of travel for the strategic measures. 2. approve the risk register position.
Author	Laura Shepherd, Director of Strategy and Performance
Responsible Officer	Maree Allison, Acting Chief Executive
Link to Strategic Plan	The information in this report links to: Outcome 1: **Trusted** People who use services are protected by a workforce that is fit to practise. Outcome 2: **Skilled** Our work supports the workforce to deliver high standards of professional practice. Outcome 3: **Confident** Our work enhances the confidence, competence and wellbeing of the workforce. 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.
Link to the Strategic Risk Register	Strategic Risk 4: We fail to provide value to our stakeholders and demonstrate our impact.
Documents attached	Appendix 1: Full 2022/23 Strategic Risk Register.

ASSURANCE REPORT AS OF 31 MARCH 2023

AAC Meeting Version

02 May 2023

Agenda item: 05, Report no: 08/2023

Action: For Decision

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SPI	SPI Description	Outcome	Risk	Ambition	Current	V(+/-)	Movement	April 2022 Proj. YE	Actions & Comments
Finance	Net expenditure (£000) (excluding grants)	1-4		3,680	2,610	+19	⬆	N/A	
Finance	Risk sensitivity (£000)	1-4		N/A	35	+130	⬆	N/A	
Finance	Reserves (%)	1-4		2 to 2.5	3.2	+0.7	⬇	N/A	
3.1 Reg	Reduce the time taken to being registered (weeks)	1	1	<18	26.0	+2.5	⬇	Amber	FPP changes will support an improvement in performance, but this is only likely in the next financial year
3.2 Reg	Time taken to process a fitness to practise case is less than organisations we benchmark against (months)	1	1	6.8	4.8	+1.4	⬇	Green	
3.3 Reg	Increase the percentage workforce who engage… in fitness to practise process (%)	1	1	80.0	84.4	+11.3	⬆	Amber	
3.4 D&I	Increase the percentage of the registered workforce with the correct qualification (%)	2	2	50.0	50.9	+0.1	⬆	Amber	
3.5 D&I	Increase the percentage of the workforce using learning resources to achieve CPL (%)	2	2	50.0	50.3	+1.7	⬆	Green	
3.6 D&I	Percentage of those reporting positively that our development activity is delivering the support required by the workforce (%)	2	2	80.0	80.7	-0.1	⬇	Green	
	Cumulative performance (%)	2	2	80.0	80.1	+0.1	⬆	Amber	
3.7 D&I	Percentage of those reporting positive awareness of workforce planning resources and report that resources are effective (#resources)	3	5	N/A	592	+177	⬆	N/A	
3.8 Reg	Deliver the Future Proofing Programme	1	1	N/A	-	-	-	N/A	
3.9 S&P	The work of the SSSC promotes the value of the social care workforce (% positivity)	4	5	N/A	-	-	-	N/A	
4.2 S&P	External stakeholder engagement (%)	1-4	5	41.0	52.6	-5.0	⬇	Green	
4.3 S&P	SSSC complaint information for Stage 1 (%)	1-4	5	90.0	97	-3.0	⬇	N/A	
	SSSC complaint information for Stage 2 (%)	1-4	5	90.0	100	0	➡	N/A	
4.4 HR	The overall percentage of staff who are absent from work (%)	1-4	6	<3.6	5.7	+1.6	⬇	N/A	
4.5 HR	The overall staff turnover percentage (%)	1-4	6	<12.4	13.8	+0.6	⬇	N/A	
4.7 L&CG	SAR requests are dealt with within timescales (%)	1-4	3	100	100	-	➡	N/A	
	FOI requests are dealt with within timescales (%)	1-4	3	100	100	-	➡	N/A	
4.8 L&CG	Number of data security incidents reported (#Red)	1-4	3	0	0	-	➡	N/A	

March 2023 SSSC STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER

Risk No.	Strategic Risk Description	Outcome	Gross	Residual	V(+/-)	Owner	Actions & Comments
1	We fail to ensure that our system of regulation meets the needs of people who use services and workers.	1	20	12	➡	DoR	
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.	2, 3	16	12	➡	DoWES	
3	We fail to meet corporate governance, external scrutiny and legal obligations.	1	16	9	➡	DoFR	
4	We fail to provide value to our stakeholders and demonstrate our impact.	1, 4	12	9	➡	DoSP	
5	We fail to develop and support SSSC staff appropriately to ensure we have a motivated and skilled workforce to achieve our strategic outcomes.	1, 2, 3	20	16	➡	DoFR	
6	The SSSC fail to secure sufficient budget resources to fulfil the financial plans required to deliver the strategic plan.	1	20	12	⬇	DoFR	Score reduced due to allocation of under funded pressure by SG.
7	The current Business Continuity Plan (BCP) in place is not up to date for the SSSC.	1, 2, 3, 4	20	4	➡	CEO	
8	We fail to have the appropriate measures in place to protect against cyber security attacks	1, 2, 3, 4	20	12	➡	DoSP	
9	We do not have accommodation in place that meets our business requirements at an acceptable cost		16	2	➡	DoFR	

[Current Full Strategic Risk Register](#)

New, Emerging, and Changed Strategic/Directorate Risks identified.

Lease situation still ongoing. Current lease extended to 19th May and SG legal are working to conclude lease discussions as soon as possible.

Scottish Government have confirmed the under-funded pressure for 2023/2024 which created part of the risk causes for Risk 6. This partly reduces the risk for 2023/2024, therefore EMT recommended that this risk likelihood is reduced to 3 as of the end of March 2023.

The last of the business continuity plan documents have been agreed and are in place. It is recommended that risk 7 is now reduced and closed for the end April risk register reporting.

The 2022/2023 pay award is still not agreed with the trade union. There is a risk we will need to increase the offer made and figures are being worked through for negotiations with the union in the next few weeks.

SSSC – CORPORATE FINANCIAL POSITION

Financial summary

2022/23 Budget	Revised budget for monitoring purposes £000
Operating budget	20,276
VSDF and disbursements	939
Postgraduate bursaries	2,914
Practice learning	2,846
	26,974
Workforce development grant (WDG)	543
Total expenditure	**27,517**
Funded by:	
Grant in aid	16,035
VSDF	900
Sub total	**16,935**
Registration fee income	5,962
Other income	397
Sub total	**6,359**
WDG and cyber resilience grant income	376
WDG and Cyber resilience grant funded from reserves	167
Net deficit - funded from reserves and SG spending pressure	3,680
Total net deficit	**3,847**
Total funding	**27,517**

Budget by Strategic Outcome	2022/23 Revised Budget £000	2022/23 percentage %
SO1	15,884	79%
SO2	3,101	15%
SO3	1,004	5%
S04	125	1%
	20,114	
Disbursements/grants	7,403	
(all inc. o/heads)	**27,517**	

	Expenditure £000	Fees and other income £000	Grant in aid and disbursement income £000	Net expenditure £000
Budget for monitoring purposes	26,974	(6,359)	(16,935)	3,680
Actual	20,651	(4,720)	(2,700)	n/a
Committed	1,297	n/a	n/a	n/a
Year end projection	26,424	(6,364)	(17,449)	2,610
projected (under)/overspend	(551)	(5)	(514)	(1,070)

Net expenditure	Budgeted net expenditure £000	Projected net expenditure £000	Projected (under)/ overspend £000
June 2022	2,614	2,614	0
July 2022	2,614	2,627	13
August 2022	2,614	2,574	(40)
September 2022	3,680	3,082	(598)
October 2022	3,680	3,082	(598)
November2022	3,680	2,591	(1,089)
December 2022	3,680	2,591	(1,089)
January 2023	3,680	2,674	(1,006)
February 2023	3,680	2,610	(1,070)

Overview

- We are projecting that we will conclude the financial year on target with a reserve balance of £637k for general use. Our general reserve target range is 2% to 2.5% (£500K to £625K)
- The accounting team are still working on the end of year processes. As at 28 February 2023 there was a projected corporate underspend of £1,070k (excluding grants). £445k relates to disbursements, which is ringfenced, leaving an in year operating underspend of £625k.
- There were no significant movements in March. The only area where there may be a significant variance is fee income. However as fees are accrued, payments later in the year will have a greater impact on the 23/24 budget.
- We expect a general reserve balance of £1,412k at 31 March 2023, with £445k relating to disbursements and £162k relating to Workforce Development Grant. This leaves a reserve balance of £805k (3.2%) of which £155k is carried forward to 2023/24 for refurbishment work on the office and £13k for digital work leaving the reserve balance for general use of £637k.

The underspend and movements since the previous assurance report are set out in the table below.

Key movements since the beginning of the financial year 28 February 2023	Projected overspend or (underspend/ additional income) £000	Movement: increase/ (decrease) to projection since last report £000
Projected overspends		
Accommodation upgrade (NR)	110	(21)
Panel Member Allowances (P)	170	0
Panel Members Holiday Pay ruling - 2 years backpay (NR)	165	0
Legal Fees (P)	99	(8)
Insights and Intelligence Project (NR)	70	29
Registration fee income (P)	68	0
Write-Offs - Registration Fees (P)	53	0
Practicing certificates (P)	32	3
Digital developments - excluding Insights and Intelligence & FPP projects (NR)	13	(9)
Advertising for new employees (P)	13	3
Total projected overspends	**793**	**(3)**
Projected underspends/additional income		
Disbursements - postgraduate bursaries (P)	(460)	0
Staff costs, including hired agency and secondments inwards (P)	(386)	(58)
Additional grant in aid - £300k staff pay award (R); £78k Fee waiver development (NR)	(378)	0
Futureproofing project including digital development (P)	(251)	(15)
Disbursements - practice learning fees (P)	15	163
Communications publicity, printing, design and postage (P)	(109)	(29)
Stationery, postage, travel, storage and archiving (corporate) (P)	(82)	(24)
Secondees outwards (NR)	(73)	(39)
Staff training (saving £20k - Flexible Workforce Development Fund grant) (NR)	(41)	1
Staff pay and grading review - paused (P)	(33)	0
Workers phone line and support advocacy (P)	(31)	0
Digital running costs (P)	(19)	(18)
Other minor underspends across the organisation (P)	(10)	(1)
WES Venue hire & hospitality and Dementia underspend (P)	(7)	8
Total projected underspends	**(1,863)**	**(13)**
Net expenditure and movements	**(1,070)**	**(15)**

KEY:

R - Recurring - likely to happen in future years
NR - Non-recurring – unlikely to happen in future years
P - Possible – could happen in future years

We have set out the significant variances in the table below.

Budget changes

Council agreed our 2022/23 budget of £1.638m (deficit) for 2022/23 on 25 March 2022. Scottish Government covered the shortfall as a temporary in year unfunded budget pressure. Council also agreed an additional £976k of expenditure (detailed in the table below) which we will fund from our general reserve as working capital.

Additional 2022/23 budget	2022/23 £000
Temporary posts	378
Futureproofing digital development	300
Fitness to practise – reinstatement of vacancy management	192
Carry forward of 2021/22 digital development underspends	59
Futureproofing service design and programme governance	36
Other planned administration expenses	11
Total to be funded from our general reserve (working capital)	976

- Since March, Scottish Government has allocated funding for the Voluntary Sector Development Fund (VSDF) of £900k and £361k to the Workforce Development Grant (WDG).
- Scottish Government agreed we could carry forward underspends from 2021/22 to use during 2022/23. We carried forward underspends totalling £943k. The breakdown of these underspends is included in the table below (£1.233m less £290k digital replacement).
- Over the last three financial years we put aside £290k for digital replacement. This was held in our general reserve. We have a further £100k in our operating budget for 2022/23, giving a total of £390k for digital replacement and we will spend this in full during 2022/23.
- There is a total revised budget for monitoring purposes of £3.847m. This is summarised in the table below.

Summary of budget movements during the year	2022/23 Budget agreed by Council £000	Additional in year funding from Scottish Government £000	General reserve funds to be used in 2022/23 £000	2022/23 Revised budget for monitoring purposes £000

Expenditure				
Base budget agreed by Council on 25 March 2022	1,638			1,638
Additional budget agreed in budget report (parag 23)	976			976
Voluntary sector development funding (VSDF)		900	24	924
Workforce development grant (WDG)		361	135	496
Cyber resilience grant			32	32
Practice learning fees			493	493
Postgraduate bursaries			259	259
Digital replacement			290	290
Gross expenditure	**2,614**	**1,261**	**1,233**	**5,108**
VSDF and WDG grants from Scottish Govt		(1,261)		(1,261)
Net expenditure	**2,614**	**0**	**1,233**	**3,847**
Net expenditure to be funded by:				
Spending pressure from Scottish Government	(1,638)			(1,638)
General reserve (working capital)	(976)		(1,233)	(2,209)
	(2,614)	**0**	**1,233**	**(3,847)**

Income and expenditure

- Actual and committed spend, excluding disbursements is £21.9m (81%) at this point in the year.
- We have accounted for 95% of our expected fees and other income (£4.720m).

Registration fees

- We have written off £330k so far this year (budget £337k, projection £390k). The main reasons for removal from the register are that people have not paid their fees or no longer need to be on the register.

Specific Grants

- Scottish Government agreed that we could carry forward £32k underspend on staff costs in the 2021/22 cyber resilience grant for use in 2022/23. At 31 March 2023 we expect to fully spend the cyber resilience grant.
- Scottish Government also agreed that we could carry forward £135k underspend for workforce development activity to 2022/23 so that we can fully deliver the outcomes. We expect an underspend of £162k on workforce development grant activity in 2022/23. Scottish Government has asked us to drawdown all WDG funding for 2022/23 and carry forward the underspend in our general reserve into 2023/24.

Significant variances from budget & key risk

The key financial risks to the position at the end of March 2023 are shown in the table.

We have highlighted other strategic risks and information at the time of writing this report in mid-April

- 2023/24 budget– Scottish Government (SG) agreed to a one year unfunded pressure of £2.066m to meet our budgeted shortfall and that we can carry forward any underspends in operating costs and disbursements to use as working capital as part of our general reserve in 2023/24. However we have not yet had confirmation of funding for the Future Proofing Programme.
- Pay remit – Scottish Ministers did not accept the alternative pay offer that Unison proposed. We resubmitted our final offer and Unison agreed that we could make an interim pay award in March in line with this on the condition that we acknowledge that pay negotiations are not yet at an end for 2022/23. Unison balloted their members who rejected the offer. We are considering the affordability of an improved offer.
- Scottish Ministers approved the lease for office accommodation in Dundee and expect it to be signed by 20 May when the lease expires. We have now reduced our space by approximately 50% however the start date for tenants for the vacant space has not yet been confirmed and therefore our liability is unclear. Our 2023/24 budget is based on paying for our new, reduced occupancy footprint. We expect any additional liability can be met from general reserves.
- We are finalising our position relating to Panel Member pension contributions. We expect a liability for backdated contributions.
- Reserves/ working capital – SG confirmed that we can carry forward general reserves at 31 March 2023 as working capital into 2023/24.
- Fees – Scottish Ministers agreed with our recommendation to delay a consultation on fees due to the recruitment and retention challenges in the sector, we are asked to review the position in late Summer.
- Efficiency savings –Scottish Government has delayed aspects of the work on public services reform and efficiency savings to the 2024/25 funding cycle.

The most significant variations to our spend are set out below. The accounting team will carry out an analysis of the reasons for variations as part of their year-end work.

Budget area	Current projection £'000	Reason for variance and reason for movement
Futureproofing project – (outcome 1)	£251k underspend	We allocated £884,700 to the Future Proofing Programme on the basis that this was a multi-year project due to the constraints of achieving legislative change.
Staff costs – (all outcomes)	£386k underspend	Staff cost underspends (total £386k) are Regulation (including FPP) (£213k); Strategy and performance (£124k); Workforce, Education and Standards (£47k); Finance and Resources (£101k). These net underspends have been partially offset by an overspend of £99k on hired agency costs across the organisation.
Staff costs – pay award	n/a	SG has agreed additional funding of £300k for the pay award and this is included in our projections, although it is unlikely to cover the full cost. Any further increase to the settlement would be seen in 2023/2024 budget
Accommodation upgrade	£110k overspend	We did not have specific funding allocated for this work which is mainly focused on developing the Hearings Suite to improve privacy in the multi-tenant office. Due to delays in the approval of the building warrant, the majority of this funding will be spent in 2023/24.
Panel Member Allowances (outcome 1)	£170k overspend	We reduced our budget because of opt in hearings, however, the number of days has not reduced in the same proportion as the number of overall hearings.

Panel Member Holiday Pay	£165k overspend	Liability as a result of the application of worker status to Panel Members.
Registration fee income - (outcome 1)	£68k less income	Current projections suggest an underachievement of registration income of 1.16% of the total budget. This is an area where there may be significant changes to the projection.
Communications publicity, printing, design and postage – (all outcomes)	£102k underspend	Projections reduced across professional fees and printing as activities are not taking place e.g. less in person events than anticipated, no progress on stakeholder involvement and engagement due to not being able to recruit staff. There was money allocated in the budget for ongoing costs due to the impact of the FPP work on corporate activity however, that work hasn't reached that stage yet so we will budget for it in 2023/24.
Legal fees - (outcome 1)	£99k overspend	3 resource-intensive and complex cases.
Insights and Intelligence Project - (all outcomes)	£70k overspend	This overspend relates to hired agency costs which are due to delays to the project timescales. We re-allocated (vired) £33k from the digital development budget to partially offset these costs, leaving a £70k overspend. There is no further risk as the project is closed.
Digital Developments	£13k	The February Digital Programme Board identified that there was a potential delay for the FtP screening work to be completed by 31 March, due to availability of the vendor to carry out the work before 31 March. The funding has been carried forward to 2023/24
Practice learning fees (disbursement)	£15k overspend	We carried forward £493k from 2021/22. Current modelling data suggests an overspend of £15k on practice learning fees. This is based on estimates from the HEIs but is subject to change as the pattern of practice learning placements within programmes remains disrupted as a result of the pandemic. This overspend will be funded from carry forward of post graduate bursaries disbursements underspends.
Postgraduate bursaries (disbursement)	£460k underspend	We carried forward £259k from 2021/22. Current estimates suggest an underspend of £460k, however, we have yet to receive and process applications for all universities. Any

		underspend is ring fenced for use to fund Hardship Funding applications from post graduate social work students.

3. STRATEGIC PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

3.1 Regulation: Reduce the average time taken from a person starting their employment to being registered with the SSSC.

Time taken from employment to registration was 26.0 weeks in March 2023. Employment to application increased by 1.9 to 21.3 weeks and application to registration increased by 0.6 to 4.7 weeks.

RAG		
<18	18 to 22	>22

Target: 18 weeks

Actual and Reforecast

Apr-22	23.7	31.7%
May-22	22.3	23.6%
Jun-22	20.4	13.4%
Jul-22	20.9	16.1%
Aug-22	25.3	40.4%
Sep-22	24.8	37.6%
Oct-22	24.0	33.5%
Nov-22	25.1	39.6%
Dec-22	27.3	51.8%
Jan-23	24.3	34.8%
Feb-23	23.5	30.5%
Mar-23	26.0	44.2%

We have revised our aim to register workers within 12 weeks of employment, 8 weeks to apply, and 4 weeks processing time. Recruitment and retention in the sector and the impact of the fee waiver continues to be a significant challenge.

There are high levels of sickness absence, referred to under HR data at 4.4, which is having an impact on our throughput. Some staff specifically recruited for the Future Proofing Programme have not been needed for work on the Programme and are being utilised to work on business as usual in Registration. These staff will need to move into the Future Proofing work as it progresses over the coming months. We have seen 40% more applications than anticipated in this financial year.

Mean Number of Weeks to Register from Employment Date
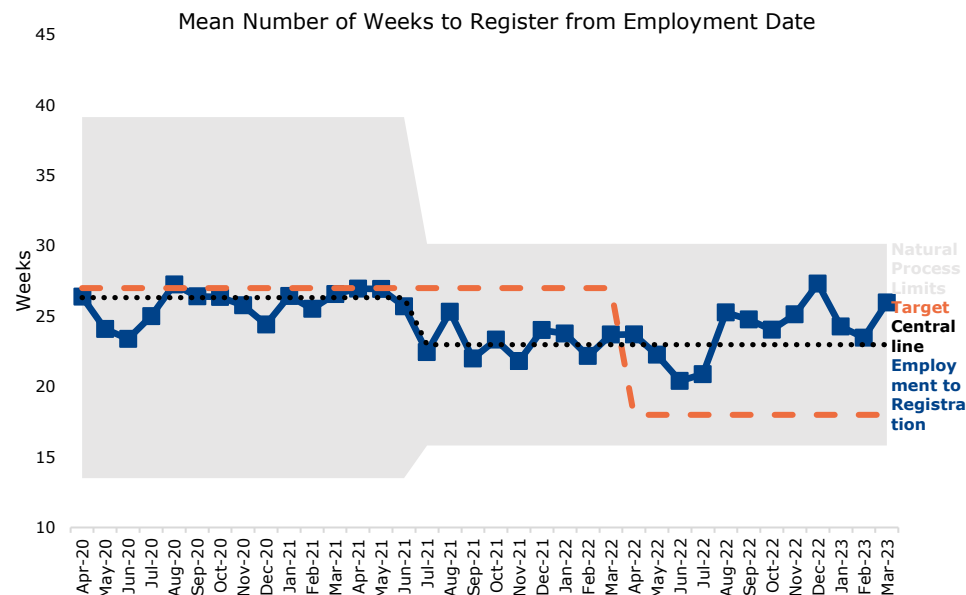
Management Action and Risk

The FPP changes requiring workers to apply for registration within 3 months of commencing the role, will improve the time from starting work to applying for registration. There will be lots of engagement on the FPP changes during 2023, including highlighting this change and encouraging employers to get into the practice of supporting workers to apply within 3 months prior to the change to Regulations.

Staff have also been working overtime to try and reduce any backlogs and we are seeing a slight improvement in workloads. We are also starting the recruitment process for Registration Assistants.

The data around this measure is vast and complex. We receive around 4,000 applications each month from more than 1,000 different employers. We are working through this data to identify

if specific organisations require additional support to encourage their workers to apply for registration sooner. We also know that some of the data is inaccurate, with start dates being entered incorrectly. Employers are prompted to provide an explanation if the application is more than 6 months from the start date. As this is free text it will take some time to analyse the data.

We have developed the following plan to approach this work over the next 6 months:

April – May
- Identify common issues with data input
- Explore reasonable excuse, and if applicable, remove from future reports (subject to system development)

June – July
- Explore changes in the system to improve the data input to recognise reasonable excuse and exclude from reporting
- Approach employers where employees have been in breach and reinforce the requirements to be registered in 6 months

August – Sept
- Progress system changes (if resources allow)
- Pause green channel applications where workers are in breach

Oct – Nov
- Re-analyse the data
- Report concerns to Care Inspectorate at organisation level

3.2 Regulation: The average time taken to process a fitness to practise case is maintained at less time than organisations we benchmark against.

Prompt processing of Fitness to Practise (FtP) cases ensures concerns are addressed and the right people are registered. We continue to outperform similar bodies (external target 17.4 months), so an internal target of 6.8 months was set.

RAG		
<0%	0% to 10%	>10%

Internal Target: 6.8 months

Actual and Reforecast

Apr-22	5.8	-15.3%
May-22	5.4	-20.3%
Jun-22	4.4	-35.5%
Jul-22	3.7	-45.4%
Aug-22	4.2	-38.9%
Sep-22	4.8	-29.9%
Oct-22	2.8	-59.4%
Nov-22	4.8	-29.1%
Dec-22	2.1	-69.3%
Jan-23	4.1	-39.8%
Feb-23	3.4	-30.1%
Mar-23	4.8	-59.1%

March 2023's performance was 4.8 months to process a Fitness to Practise case. 42% of cases (131 of 309) were closed at screening stage, 8% decrease from last month.

At the end of March 2023, the number of open cases was 1,824. A decrease of 38 from the previous month and an overall reduction of 431 from March 2022. The median age of open cases at the end of March 2023 was 231, a decrease of 11 days from the previous month.

Median Number of Months taken to Process a FtP Case

Number of Open Cases at the end of the month

Age of open cases by grouping
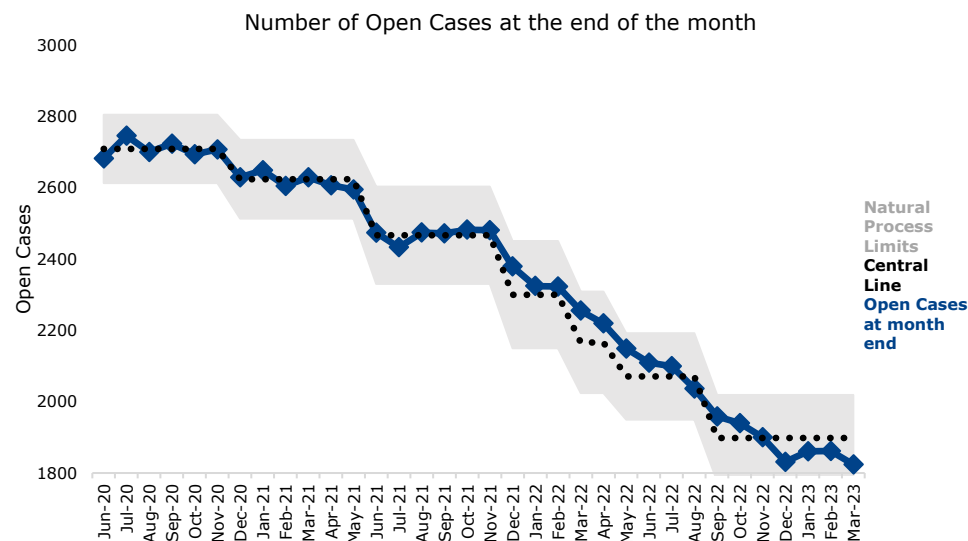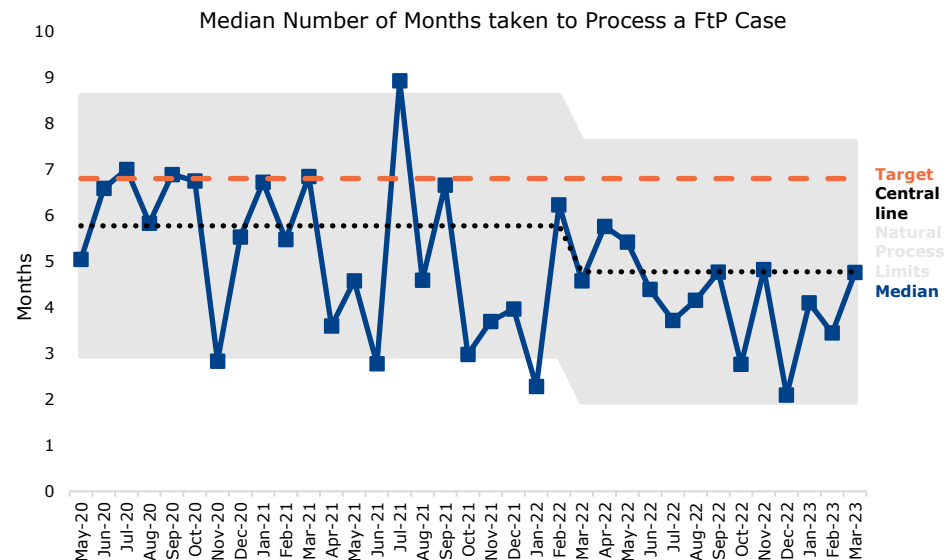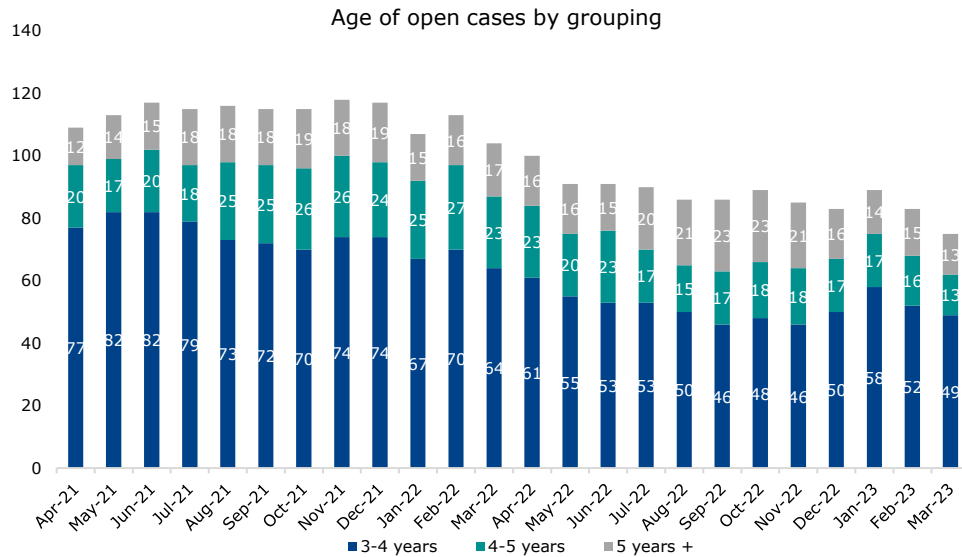
The trend of a monthly reduction in open cases is levelling out – performance is dropping. The FtP workforce was stable from 2020 however in recent months solicitor and senior solicitor turnover has increased and constitutes a risk. There are more expected leavers in FtP which is detailed in 4.5 below. Feedback from exit interviews consistently tells us that salary is an issue.

- There is a risk that performance will continue to drop if we continue to lose experienced legal staff and fail to recruit.
- There is a risk of reduced quality of work as a greater percentage of the team are inexperienced.
- There is an impact on staff morale.

Two long term staff absences one each in RIH and FtP are impacting on the ability to provide training and pressure on case numbers.
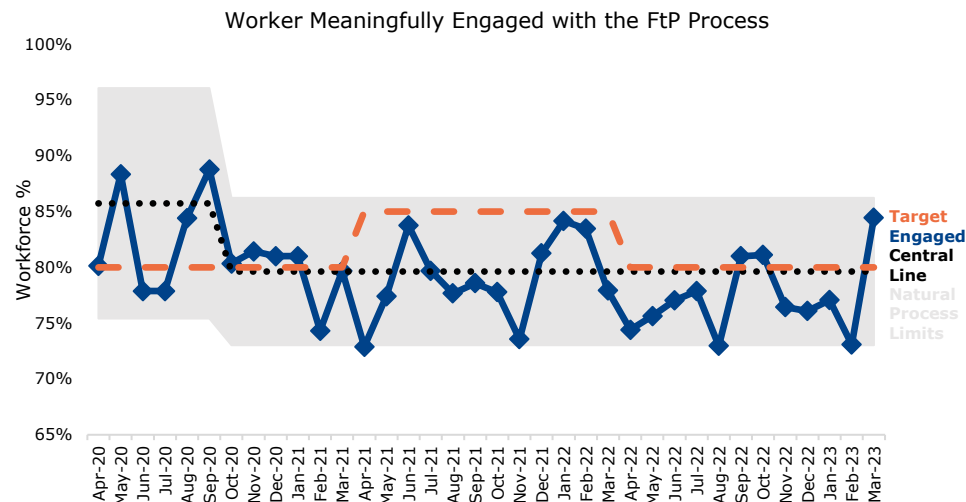
Management Action and Risk

Actions:

- We are highlighting the training offer as one of the benefits of working for the SSSC.
- We are focusing on building resilience in staff and encouraging autonomy in their reasoning and decision-making.
- We are deploying two senior posts to the creation of a hub of legal and advocacy excellence to add to our offer.

3.3 Regulation: Increase the percentage of the workforce who are engaged when they are involved with the fitness to practise process.

If a worker has provided a response to allegations, this is likely to amount to meaningful engagement. March 2023's performance was 84.4% engagement (152 of 180 cases).

RAG

>80%	70% to 80%	<70%

Target: 80%

Actual and Reforecast

Apr-22	74.4%	-7.0%
May-22	75.6%	-5.4%
Jun-22	77.0%	-3.7%
Jul-22	77.9%	-2.7%
Aug-22	73.0%	-8.8%
Sep-22	81.0%	1.2%
Oct-22	81.1%	1.4%
Nov-22	76.4%	-4.5%
Dec-22	76.1%	-4.9%
Jan-23	77.1%	-3.7%
Feb-23	73.1%	-8.7%
Mar-23	84.4%	5.6%

Worker Meaningfully Engaged with the FtP Process
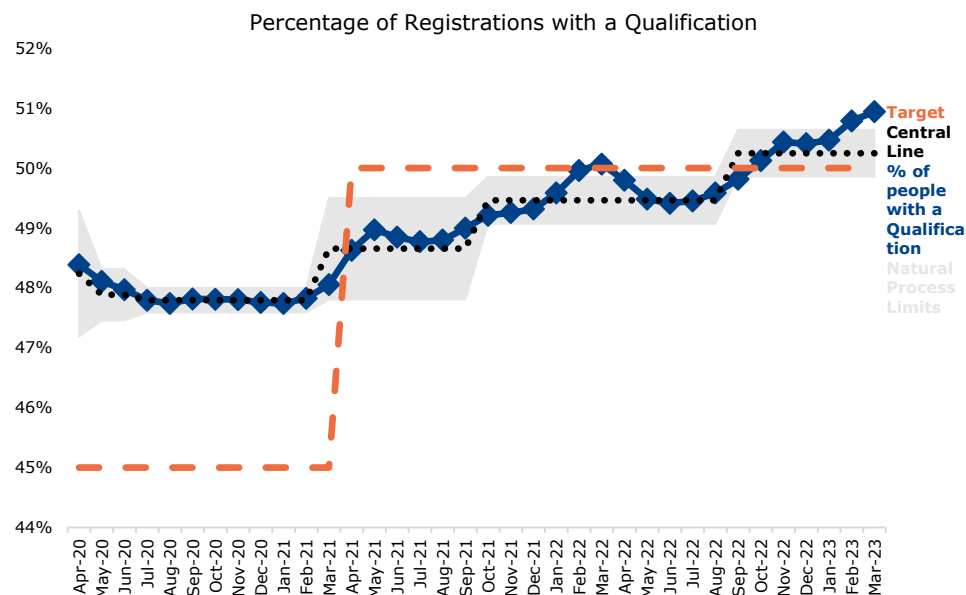
Management Action and Risk

- We continue to work to improve access to representation and support services for workers, including the wellbeing support provision, which helps them to meaningfully engage. We have given staff and panel members training on trauma-informed practice.
- We continue to work with employers to teach the workforce about how important it is for them to engage with us. We have produced a fact sheet for employers which includes the employer's role in our investigations and how to support workers.
- We prompt case holders through our case management system to phone workers under investigation at the start of the case to improve engagement as well as supporting them to use the FtP portal to keep up to date with their case.

3.4 Workforce Education and Standards: increase the percentage of the registered workforce with the correct qualification.

March 2023's performance was 50.9%.

RAG		
>50%	47.5% to 50%	<47.5%
	Target: 50%	

Actual and Reforecast

Apr-22	49.8%	-0.4%
May-22	49.5%	-1.0%
Jun-22	49.4%	-1.2%
Jul-22	49.5%	-1.1%
Aug-22	49.6%	-0.8%
Sep-22	49.8%	-0.4%
Oct-22	50.1%	0.2%
Nov-22	50.4%	0.9%
Dec-22	50.4%	0.8%
Jan-23	50.5%	0.9%
Feb-23	50.8%	1.6%
Mar-23	50.9%	1.8%

Percentage of Registrations with a Qualification

Management Action and Risk

- The Register for the Future consultation proposals including more flexibility in the qualifications we accept for registration, and reducing the timescales given to obtain the relevant qualification for registration, were approved by Council in November 2022 and will be implemented in April 2024. These changes will help increase the qualified status of the workforce.

- In partnership with SQA we surveyed all training and learning providers who currently deliver the benchmark qualifications, to gather further intelligence on capacity within the system to adapt and address the supply and demand challenges highlighted within the WSR. The results show there is sufficient capacity amongst the providers.

- We are working in partnership with Skills Development Scotland, Scottish Government, and NES to develop a skills response plan for Adult Social Care. The findings of the initial research and scoping will be available by end of May 2023.

- The Voluntary Sector Development Fund (VSDF) has prioritised applications from Care at Home and Housing Support as these remain the least qualified groups on the register. Funding is available for SVQ Social Services and Healthcare at SCQF levels 6 and 7; given the increasing complexity of roles and changing models of care delivery, the SSSC/SG encouraged level 7 applications. 75 voluntary organisations have been awarded grants in this year's funding round to support the workforce to gain qualifications.

3.5 Workforce Education and Standards: Increase the percentage of the workforce using our learning resources to achieve Continuous Professional Learning.

The indicator reflects the number of learners registered to use our learning resources and the number of SSSC open badges awarded. March 2023's performance was 50.3%. We track how many people have been actively using the MyLearning app in the last 30 days, which was 5,582 compared to last month's 6,399. We also monitor the number of learning logs created in the last 30 days, which was 18,619 compared to last month's 22,962.

	RAG	
>50%	45% to 50%	<45%
	Target: 50%	

Apr-22	46.5%	-6.9%
May-22	46.9%	-6.2%
Jun-22	46.0%	-7.9%
Jul-22	45.6%	-8.9%
Aug-22	43.8%	-12.5%
Sep-22	44.9%	-10.2%
Oct-22	45.8%	-8.4%
Nov-22	46.6%	-6.8%
Dec-22	47.0%	-5.9%
Jan-23	47.6%	-4.7%
Feb-23	48.6%	-2.7%
Mar-23	50.3%	0.4%

We had predicted to end the year in an Amber position. However, due to 1,552 new learner accounts and 756 open badges being awarded we saw the biggest percentage increase in performance since May 2021.

The 1,552 new learner accounts was the most accounts registered in a single month this financial year. The number of open badges awarded, 756, was also the most badges we have awarded in a single month this financial year.

There are 5,801 accounts that currently fit the criteria of a dormant account. However, not all of these accounts are true dormant accounts, and some users will keep their accounts active once they have a reminder email. They will remain as part of the calculation for this financial year but for the new Strategic Plan WE&S and the Business Intelligence team will propose a different way of measuring performance for this strategic outcome.

Percentage of Users and Badges awarded against Individuals Registered
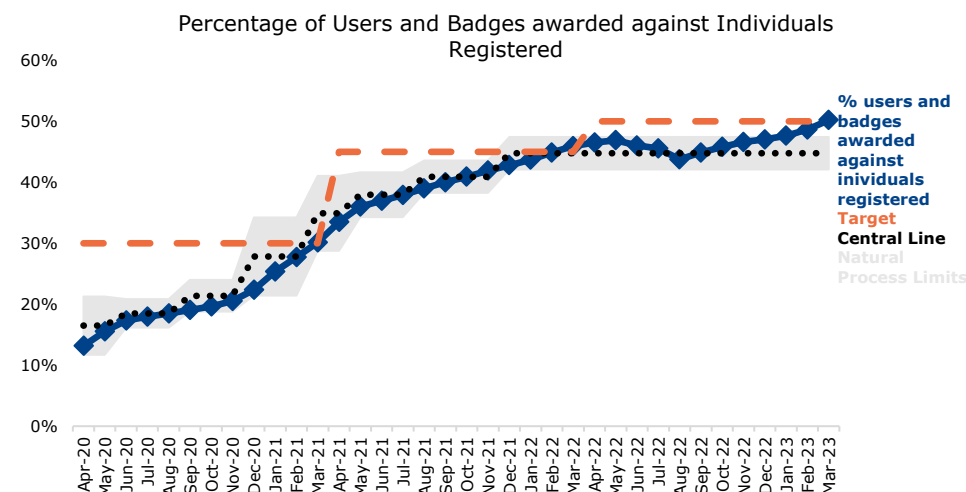
Management Action and Risk

- WES SSSC website content has been revised to be more accessible to users and highlights key learning resources.
- Recorded version of the WES registrant events held earlier in the year being developed to share information more widely.
- Refresh of the Learning Zone planned for 2023/24 and will incorporate functionality to support better curation, signposting to, and accessibility of resources for relevant user groups.

- Accessibility of WES learning resources is being reviewed and two accessibility champions have been identified to lead this work.
- Discussing with Communications colleagues how to move away from blanket communication about learning resources and better target this for careers stage, register part, and in line with the new model of CPL. Will include how we use social media to raise awareness of resources.
- We are working with colleagues at NES to develop new Open Badges for workers across health and social services.

3.6 Workforce Education and Standards: Percentage of those reporting positively that our development activity is delivering the support required by the workforce.

This indicator reflects the feedback from people who have been using SSSC learning to support their continuous professional development. This calculation uses survey information from:

- the users of learning resources including step into leadership and open badges
- registrants who have recently renewed or completed a qualification
- surveys across our corporate website and our learning zone
- post-event feedback.

RAG

>80%	70% to 80%	<70%

Target: 80%

Monthly Performance Actual and Reforecast

Apr-22	80.1%	0.1%
May-22	78.0%	-2.5%
Jun-22	78.8%	-1.5%
Jul-22	73.8%	-7.7%
Aug-22	84.2%	5.3%
Sep-22	77.9%	-2.6%
Oct-22	86.7%	8.4%
Nov-22	75.5%	-5.6%
Dec-22	80.5%	0.6%
Jan-23	84.5%	5.7%
Feb-23	80.8%	1.9%
Mar-23	80.1%	0.1%

RAG

>80%	70% to 80%	<70%

Target: 80%

Cumulative Performance actual and Reforecast

Apr-22	80.1%	0.1%
May-22	79.0%	-1.3%
Jun-22	78.9%	-1.4%
Jul-22	77.6%	-3.0%
Aug-22	78.9%	-1.4%
Sep-22	78.7%	-1.6%
Oct-22	79.8%	-0.2%
Nov-22	79.3%	-0.9%
Dec-22	79.4%	-0.8%
Jan-23	80.0%	0.0%
Feb-23	80.1%	0.2%
Mar-23	80.2%	0.1%

From the above sources, the number of responses we received in March 2023 was 487 compared to last month's 449. In March 2023 we received a positive score of 80.1% and an overall cumulative performance of 80.2%. Since April 2022 we have received 4,374 responses. Based on this sample size we can say for that for the population (approximately 167,000 registrants)

we have a 99% confidence level that cumulative performance sits in between of 78.2% and 82.2%.


Positive Score of Development Activity
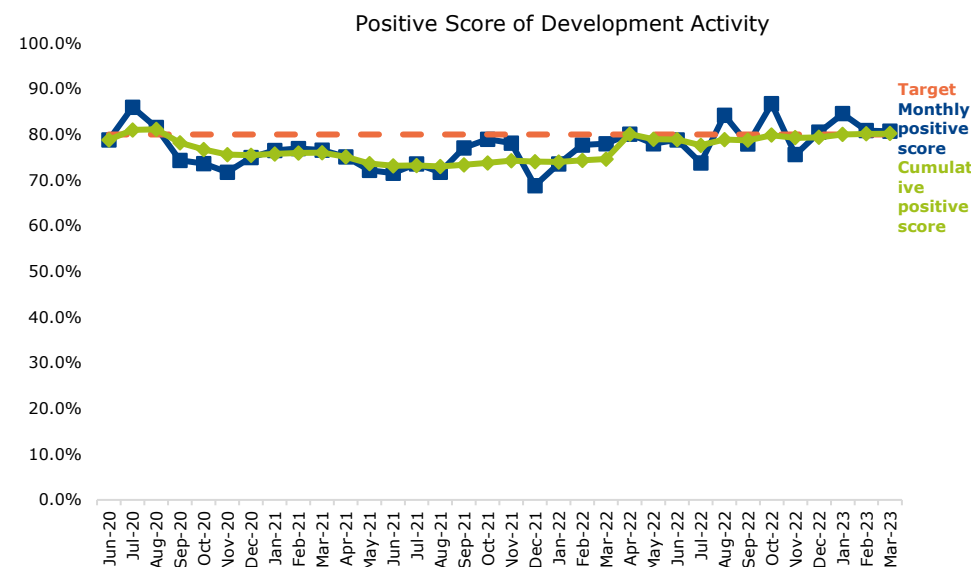
Management Action and Risk

WES is undertaking further work to measure stakeholder satisfaction with resources. This includes the following.

- Continue to use the data from the MyLearning app to understand what resources registrants are consuming and how they are applying these to their CPD and registration conditions. Analysis of registrant usage of our digital learning resources and digital insights has informed the development of an improvement action plan to target promotion and use of resources.
- The registrant learning resources survey results are being analysed and incorporated into the WES improvement action plan.

3.7 Workforce Education and Standards: Percentage of those reporting positive awareness of workforce planning resources and report that resources are effective.

The indicator reflects the number of people using our workforce planning resources and their rating of the content.
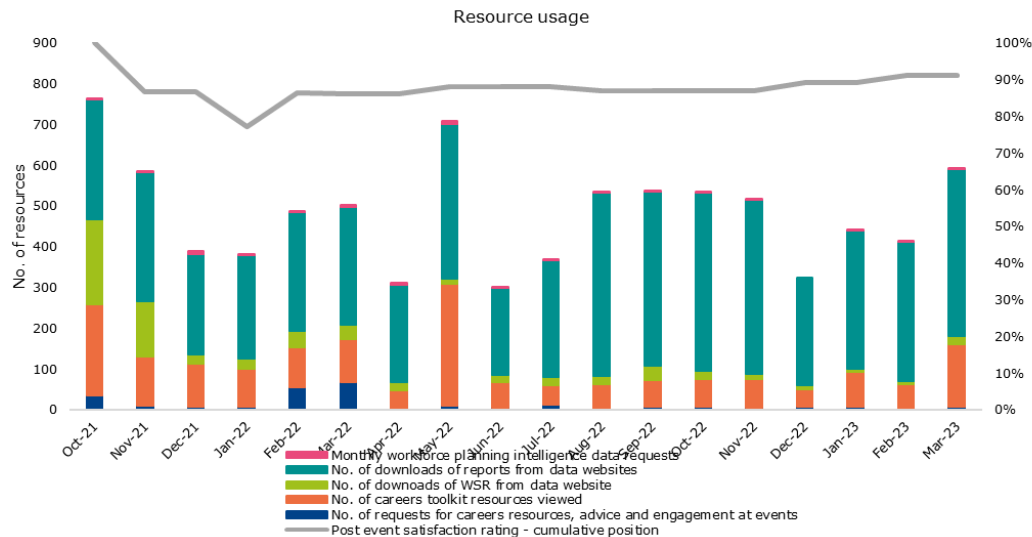
592 resources were used in March 2023 compared to 415 last month. The number of careers toolkit unique views increased from 61 to 154 and the number of downloads of reports from the data website increased from 343 to 409.
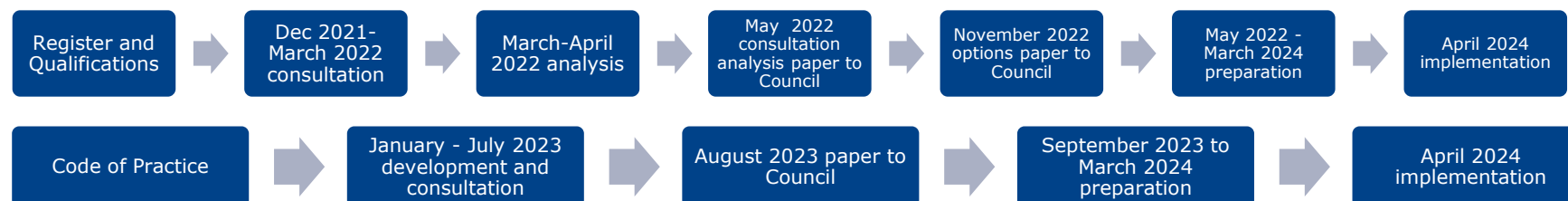
Management Action and Risk

- We have developed four pre-employment resources, including 10 Steps to a Career in Care, which we are adding to our suite of careers toolkit resources.
- We continue to promote our resources at our quarterly workforce planning network webinars. We are in discussion with the Care Inspectorate to consider how we

might widen this network to support safer staffing activity being led by them with support from the SSSC. Discussions are ongoing with COSLA, local authorities and OCSWA regarding collecting data on local authority social work vacancies and the use of agency staff. The quarterly collection would include data on social work numbers, vacancies, and use of agency social workers by local authorities.

- New workforce data report focusing on workforce distribution will be published in April/May 2023

3.8 Regulation: Deliver the Future Proofing Programme.

The indicator reflects the development of improvements to be made through the SSSC Future Proofing Programme. Progress against project milestones is in the quarterly update provided to the Audit and Assurance Committee. Project updates will also be included in assurance reports. Delivery is projected to take up to three years. The high-level timeline has been amended as follows.
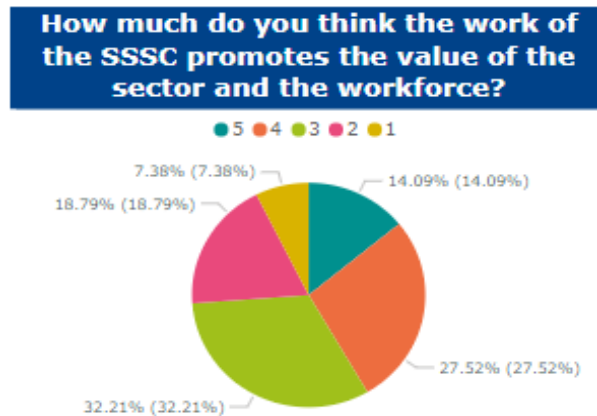
| Register and Qualifications | → | Dec 2021-March 2022 consultation | → | March-April 2022 analysis | → | May 2022 consultation analysis paper to Council | → | November 2022 options paper to Council | → | May 2022 - March 2024 preparation | → | April 2024 implementation |

| Code of Practice | → | January - July 2023 development and consultation | → | August 2023 paper to Council | → | September 2023 to March 2024 preparation | → | April 2024 implementation |

Management Action and Risk

- There are two significant risks to this programme. Firstly, securing legislative change and secondly securing funding for this and future years to do the work necessary to change the structure of the register. Sponsor team is working on this with the Scottish Government Legal Department, and we are now working towards implementation in April 2024. We are continuing to speak positively with government about securing the funding that we need to complete this programme.
- In terms of other risks, at present the key risks focus on staffing availability and capacity, particularly as relates to systems development and communications work. Programme manager held full risk review with SRO and project leads on 15 February 2023. This resulted in some changes to residual risk scores and some risks being closed.
- The planned Scottish Government Digital Assurance Office assessment of the systems development project has been postponed until funding is confirmed for 2023/24 by Scottish Government.
- Sponsor Group approved a change request to bring scoping and registration of new groups into programme scope at their meeting on 9 March 2023.
- Incremental Group and staff from Systems Development and Registration have completed Wave 1 of systems development with internal testing of this work now taking place.

3.9 Strategy and Performance: The work of the SSSC promotes the value of the social care workforce.

This measure focuses on feedback that our work promotes the value of the social care workforce through engagement activity, and the impact of this workforce being qualified and registered, professional and regulated, by surveying registrants throughout the year, as well as our key stakeholders.

The Stakeholder Survey asked stakeholders about the work of the SSSC, 42% strongly agreed (5) or agreed (4) that the work of the SSSC promotes the value of the sector and workforce.

How much do you think the work of the SSSC promotes the value of the sector and the workforce?

● 5 ● 4 ● 3 ● 2 ● 1

7.38% (7.38%)
14.09% (14.09%)
18.79% (18.79%)
27.52% (27.52%)
32.21% (32.21%)

Our Registrant Survey also asked, 'The work of the SSSC promotes the value of the sector and the workface' of which 57% of responses strongly agree (5) or agree (4).

The work of the SSSC promotes the value of the sector and the workforce

● 5 ● 4 ● 3 ● 2 ● 1

9.23%
10.16%
30.27%
23.84%
26.51%

26
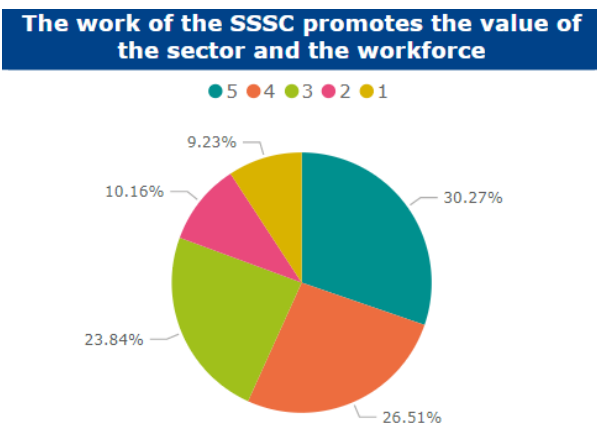
Management Action and Risk

We are developing an action plan with OMT based on the results received from the Registrants Survey looking how we can improve our offer to Registrants. We have already been able to achieve some quick wins e.g., recoding webinars for workers to view when it suits them if they cannot attend the session live. Other actions will require to be considered in wider strategic context for delivering the new strategic plan.

4. ORGANISATION INFORMATION

4.1 Programme Management Office

Overall Summary: Programmes

| Programme	Project Sponsor	Phase	Budget RAG	Risk/ Issues RAG	Stakeholder Buy In RAG	Timescale RAG	Overall RAG	Approval and Monitoring	Key Milestone	Comment
Digital Programme	DofSP	Implement	Red	Amber	Green	Red	Red	All digital projects approved and monitored at by Digital Development Sponsor Group and Digital Development Programme Board. Updates with PMO	**Conditions not met improvements project:** Complete. **Future proofing digital changes project:** Wave 1 complete. **Wordpress consolidation project:** Installation set up complete. Testing complete. **MatterSphere upgrade project:** Complete. **MatterSphere screening project:** Screening Form tested. Supplier discovery days complete. **Bundledoc project:** Complete.	While the overall digital programme budget position is not at risk, the red level risk is being created by Future Proofing. The systems changes part of FPP is currently tracking as an underspend this year and budget commitment for 2023/24 has not yet been approved. **MatterSphere screening project:** Project will not complete this financial year. Budget approved to carry forward to 23/24.
Future-Proofing Programme	CE	Deployment	Red	Amber	Green	Amber	Red	Programme approved and monitored by the Future-Proofing Programme Board. Updates with PMO.	No milestones to be achieved this month.	Budget remains at red as no change to position - yet to receive confirmation of budget from Scottish Government for 2023/24. Timescales for legislative change remain out with our control therefore overall assessed as amber

Rewards Review	DoFR							Programme approved and monitored by the Rewards Review Programme Governance Group monthly.		Programme suspended until further review.

4.2 External Stakeholder Engagement

Our 'opened performance' is based on users opened against delivered. Each month there are five regular mailers are issued. These mailers are under the categories "All News", "Adults", "Children", "Employers" and "Social workers and students". Most months additional mailers are issued however to measure progress this measure will concentrate on the five regular mailers.

March 2023's performance was 52.6%.

RAG		
>5%	-5% to 5%	<-5%
	Target: 41%	

	% Opened	
Apr-22	52.3%	27.4%
May-22	54.3%	32.4%
Jun-22	52.7%	28.4%
Jul-22	46.5%	13.4%
Aug-22	54.6%	33.1%
Sep-22	45.8%	11.7%
Oct-22	58.0%	41.4%
Nov-22	58.6%	42.9%
Dec-22	47.0%	14.7%
Jan-23	56.8%	38.5%
Feb-23	57.6%	40.5%
Mar-23	52.6%	28.3%

Opened performance percentage for 5 regular mailers
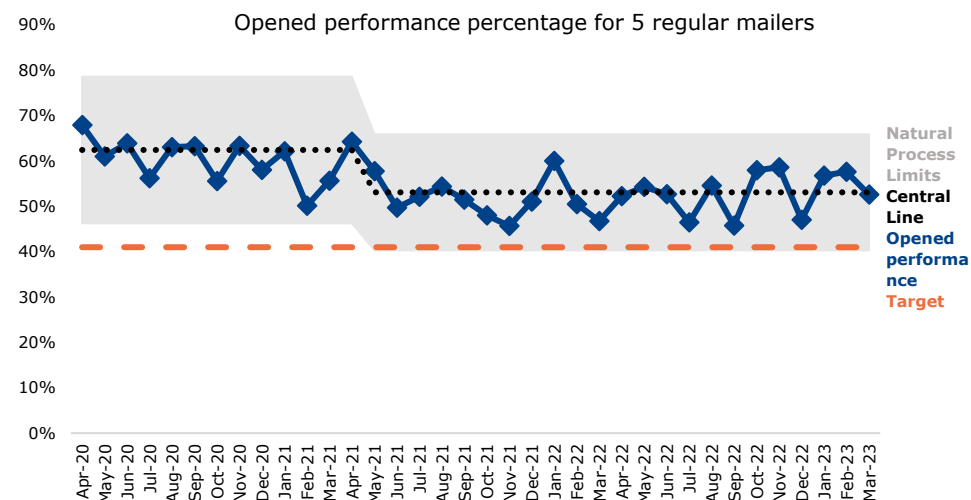
Management Action and Risk

- We send newsletters to between 165k – 185k people each time and go out twice a month. There are different newsletters for the parts of the register as well as for employers and subscribers who are people with an interest in our work.

- The second newsletter in March focused on regulation and this is the first in a series on this topic. We sent different versions of the newsletter to three audiences, residential childcare (RCC) registrants, all other registrants and employers. There was a focus on RCC this time due to the proportion of fitness to practise investigation for this group.

- Engagement in the Focus on Regulation newsletter overall was high with over 58% engaging with the content.

MARCH IMPACT HIGHLIGHTS

Main newsletter articles

Top performing article

The article with the most opens/read was the updated COVID-19 guidance from Public Health Scotland with 15,013 people opening the article. We don't have follow up information from PHS on impact.

Article: Celebrating Scottish Apprenticeship Week 2023

Communications objective - To highlight the SSSC's role in Modern Apprentices and to encourage employers and managers to find out more and to get engagement in our content across our social channels.

Communications outcome – 768 people opened/read the article.

Client objective – Employers and managers to visit the Modern Apprenticeships resource to find out more.

Client outcome – Visits to the careers and education modern apprenticeship section of our website was 343 unique views in March 2023 this was up from 292 in January 2023, 264 in February 2023 and up from 290 in March 2022.

Focus on regulation newsletter articles

Article: Fitness to practise cases (inc RCC article)

Communications objective – To highlight the fitness to practise information on the website in particular to increase downloads of the resources designed to inform and support registrants practice.

Communications outcome – 4043 people opened/read the article on the website. 'Factsheet 5 Help and advice for people involved in our fitness to practise processes jumped from 98 downloads in the first three months of 2023 to 252 downloads since 20 March.

Client objective – To provide information general on fitness to practise and the resources available to support people involved in investigations.

Client outcome – Factsheet downloads increased as above. The Making Better Decisions resource views increased from 101 view in February to 649 views in March.

Article: Meeting qualification conditions

Communications objective - To remind registrants and employers of their responsibilities in meeting qualification conditions.

Communications outcome – 1,571 people opened/read the article. The 'Your responsibilities as a register worker' website page received a 118% increase in visits in the days after the newsletter.

Client objective – To get as many registrants as possible to keep working towards their qualifications and tell us if there will be a delay.

Client outcome – waiting for data from Registration but initial reports point to a spike in registrants completing this information in MySSSC.

## 4.3 Strategy and Performance: SSSC complaint information.

This metric will compare the performance of complaints at stage one and complaints at stage two using the date when a complaint has been recorded as resolved. The graphic shows the trend in the number of complaints received. We have twenty days to resolve a stage two complaint and five days to resolve a stage one complaint.

RAG		
>90%	80% to 90%	<80%
Target: 90%		

Percentage of stage one complaints resolved on time		
Apr-22	96.2%	6.8%
May-22	96.4%	7.1%
Jun-22	100%	11.1%
Jul-22	97.9%	8.7%
Aug-22	100%	11.1%
Sep-22	100%	11.1%
Oct-22	100%	11.1%
Nov-22	100%	11.1%
Dec-22	100%	11.1%
Jan-23	97.1%	7.9%
Feb-23	100%	11.1%
Mar-23	97%	7.6%

RAG		
>90%	80% to 90%	<80%
Target: 90%		

Percentage of stage two complaints resolved on time		
Apr-22	-	-
May-22	-	-
Jun-22	100%	11.1%
Jul-22	100%	11.1%
Aug-22	-	-
Sep-22	100%	11.1%
Oct-22	-	-
Nov-22	-	-
Dec-22	100%	11.1%
Jan-23	100%	11.1%
Feb-23	100%	11.1%
Mar-23	100%	11.1%

Complaints Received
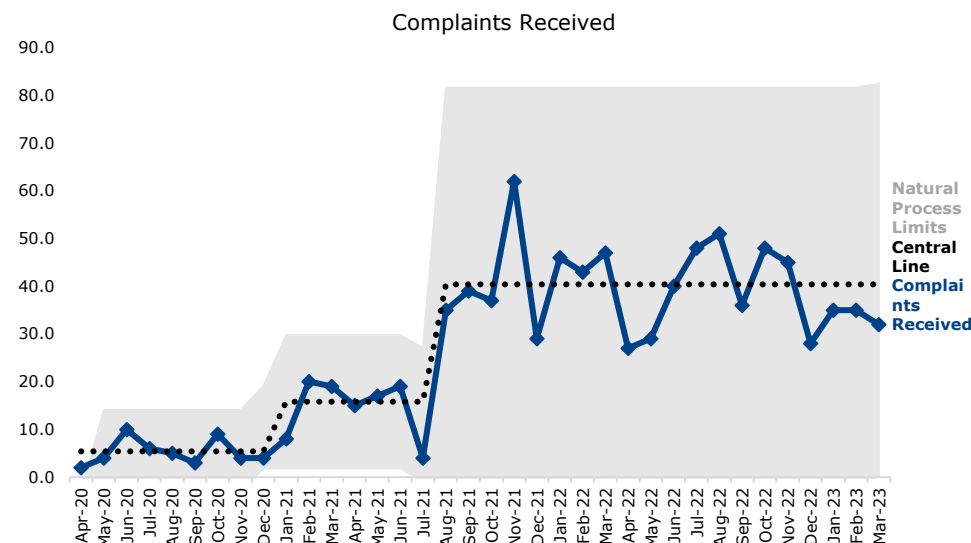
We resolved 30 stage one complaints and two stage two complaint in March 2023.

One of the stage one complaints missed its deadline in March 2023, this complaint was related to 'Fee Process' and Registration department. This complaint was initially responded to within the set timescale but required further investigation and decision making before it could be resolved. This resulted in the completion timescale exceeding the stage 1 deadline.

Management Action and Risk

No action needed.

HUMAN RESOURCES PERFORMANCE

4.4 HR: The overall percentage of staff who are absent from work.

This metric combines all types of absence across the SSSC to give an overall metric. The assessment will focus on any areas of concern or risk by looking at sickness absence by directorate or team. We will identify any emerging reasons that could cause more staff absences in the future.
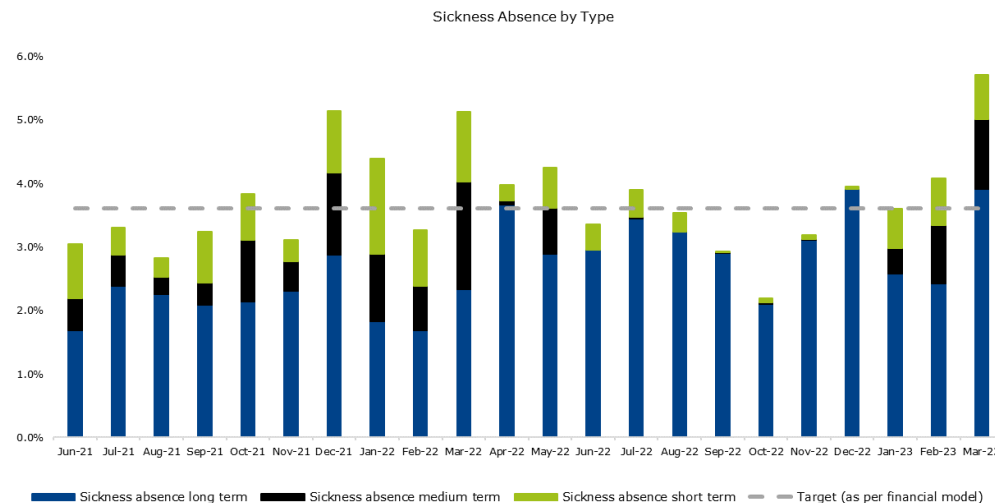
RAG		
<3.6%	3.6% to 4.6%	>4.6%
	Target: 3.6%	

Apr-22	4.0%	10.3%
May-22	4.2%	18.0%
Jun-22	3.3%	-7.0%
Jul-22	3.9%	8.1%
Aug-22	3.5%	-1.9%
Sep-22	2.9%	-18.6%
Oct-22	2.2%	-39.3%
Nov-22	3.2%	-11.5%
Dec-22	4.0%	9.8%
Jan-23	3.6%	-0.3%
Feb-23	4.1%	13.3%
Mar-23	5.7%	58.3%

Definitions: Short-term absence is up to a week. Medium-term absence is between 8 and 27 calendar days. Long-term absence is a period of four weeks or more.

There were twelve employees absent due to long term sickness in March 2023.

These were due to reasons in seven different absence categories and do not present any trend in terms of reasons for absence.

Six absences were in Registration which has caused capacity issues in the department.

Sickness Absence by Type

Legend: Sickness absence long term ■ | Sickness absence medium term ■ | Sickness absence short term ■ | Target (as per financial model) - -

Management Action and Risk

Registration have identified actions under SPI 3.1 which are helping to reduce the capacity issues created by these absences.

We continue to monitor and support managers in managing absence. Of the 12 long term absences we have worked with individuals and managers and have one confirmed return to work date and another in a much improved position, we are hopeful of a return to work soon.

4.5 HR: The overall staff turnover percentage.

This metric looks at the average staff turnover each month for the SSSC and we will compare this with the yearly rolling average. The assessment will focus on any areas of concern or risk by looking at staff turnover in certain directorates or teams. We will identify any emerging reasons that could cause more staff turnover within an area.

RAG		
<12.4%	12.4% to 13.4%	>13.4%
	Target: 12.4%	

Apr-22	11.1%	-10.3%
May-22	12.3%	-0.8%
Jun-22	13.2%	6.3.%
Jul-22	15.3%	23.1%
Aug-22	14.0%	12.8%
Sep-22	13.9%	12.5%
Oct-22	13.9%	12.1%
Nov-22	14.8%	19.2%
Dec-22	13.2%	6.8%
Jan-23	13.5%	8.8%
Feb-23	13.2%	6.8%
Mar-23	13.8%	11.0%

There were five leavers in March, three in Fitness to Practise, one in EMT & Support and one in Education and Standards. These were two resignations, two end of fixed term contracts and one retirement.

Overall Staff Turnover
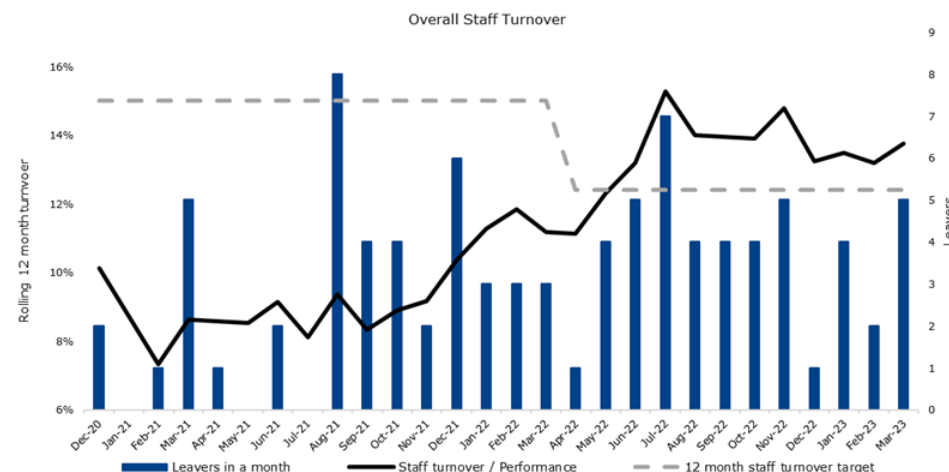
Management Action and Risk

We continue to encourage staff to complete our exit questionnaire and take up the option of exit interviews. We monitor the reasons for leaving to identify trends. Two of the five leavers in March 2023 completed exited questionnaires. The reasons for leaving were changes in their own personal circumstances and more opportunity to do the elements of their role they enjoy.

LEGAL AND CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

## 4.7 L&CG: SAR and FOI requests are dealt with within timescales.

We must respond to 100% of SAR requests within one calendar month. In March 2023 we responded to three SAR requests and met the statutory timescales.

We must respond to Freedom of Information (FOI) requests within 20 working days. In March 2023 we responded to three requests and met the statutory timescales.

| RAG		
>90%	80% to 90%	<80%
Target: 100%		
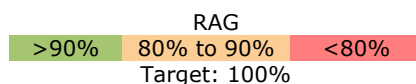
Percentage of SAR completed on time

Apr-22	100%	0%
May-22	100%	0%
Jun-22	100%	0%
Jul-22	100%	0%
Aug-22	100%	0%
Sep-22	100%	0%
Oct-22	--	--
Nov-22	--	--
Dec-22	100%	0%
Jan-23	100%	0%
Feb-23	100%	0%
Mar-23	100%	0%

RAG		
>90%	80% to 90%	<80%
Target: 100%		
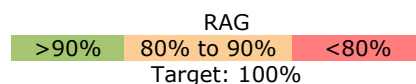
Percentage of FOI requests completed on time

Apr-22	100%	0%
May-22	100%	0%
Jun-22	100%	0%
Jul-22	100%	0%
Aug-22	100%	0%
Sep-22	100%	0%
Oct-22	100%	0%
Nov-22	100%	0%
Dec-22	100%	0%
Jan-23	100%	0%
Feb-23	100%	0%
Mar-23	100%	0%

SAR and FOI responses

Legend: ■ Responses sent on time ■ Responses not sent on time
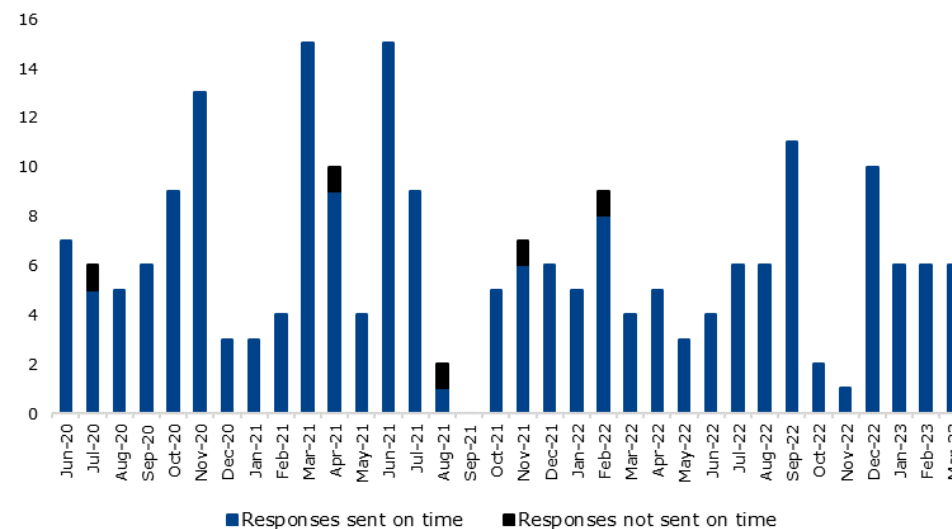
Management Action and Risk

No action needed.

4.8 L&CG: Number of security incidents/data breaches reported.

We complete a risk assessment and investigation in relation to each data security incident reported to the Information Governance team. We decide if the incident is a data breach. A data breach is a breach of security leading to the accidental or unlawful destruction, loss, alteration, or unauthorised disclosure of, or access to, personal data. We also note when we must refer a data breach to the ICO.

As part of the risk assessment process, we categorise data security incidents as low/green, medium/amber, or high risk/red, dependent on factors such as the volume of data released, the sensitivity of information released, and the risk to affected individuals.

Nine data security incidents/breaches were reported in March 2023. The Information Governance Team assessed these and categorised eight as low/green and one medium/amber.

Number of Data Security Incidents Reported

Management Action and Risk

The Information Governance Team assesses each incident and makes recommendations to ensure that a repeat of the incident does not happen.

We send the breach investigation report with the recommendations to the Head of Department. The DPO follows up on recommendations for an amber or red categorised incident.

CONTROL CHARTS

This section gives a brief description of some of the terms used within the control charts.

Central line – this is the average performance and indicates the trend in performance. The line is also used to calculate the lower and upper natural processes. If the line is flat then performance is steady, if the central line moves up or down this indicates that the trend in performance has changed over several months and the central line has had to be recalculated.

Natural process limit – This is the region between the lower natural process limit and the upper natural process limit. How performance sits within this limit will determine if we need to calculate the central line. If a performance point sits outside of this natural process limit, then it would be considered an outlier. The upper and lower natural limits are calculated based on the average of the moving range, the moving range being the difference between two performance points.