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| <b>Title of report</b>           | Chief Executive's Report  |
| <b>Public/confidential</b>       | Public  |
| <b>Action</b>                    | For information   |
| <b>Summary/purpose of report</b> | This report provides Council Members with an update on key developments since the last Council meeting on 23 January 2018.  |
| <b>Recommendations</b>           | The Council is asked to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. note the information contained in this report</li> <li>2. offer comment on the content.</li> </ol> |
| <b>Link to Strategic Plan</b>    | The information in this report links to Outcome 4 of the Strategic Plan, that our stakeholders value our work.  |
| <b>Link to the Risk Register</b> | This report links to the Strategic Risk Register in that it aims to contribute to open, transparent and informed governance arrangements.                             |
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| <b>Documents attached</b>        | Appendix 1: Registration statistics   |

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This report sets out the highlights across the organisation since the last Council Meeting in January.
- 1.2 I have included highlights from each function, as well as some examples of things that are significant from my own perspective. I have also included examples of collaborative working and examples of the values in practice.

## **DEPARTMENTAL HIGHLIGHTS**

### **2. Registration**

- 2.1 When the Register opened for support workers in care at home and housing support we optimistically projected that we would receive 10,000 applications by the end of the financial year. Up to 2 March we have received 12,262 applications, of which 7,751 have been processed and registered. It should be noted that as many of these workers work across combined services they are required to be on both register parts. The 12,262 figures relates to 7,659 individual workers. We also know that a further 6,854 workers are in the process of applying for registration but have not yet submitted their application.
- 2.2 This positive response to the Register opening reflects the engagement work we carried out with employers, employer representative groups and workers in the months leading up to the register opening.
- 2.3 The following sets out some of the work in registration for the first 8 weeks of 2017 and 2018. This demonstrates the significant increase in our workload. Managing this work with the same number of staff is challenging, however we have refined our processes and improved our system to manage it.

| <b>Work</b>       | <b>Number received in 2017</b> | <b>Number received in 2018</b> |
|-------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Applications      | 5,054                          | 10,060                         |
| Renewals          | 1,328                          | 2,010                          |
| Change of Details | 13,073                         | 16,449                         |

- 2.4 At the end of March we will assess our position with the new parts of the Register in terms of the pace of applications we are receiving. From there we will plan our approach with those who have yet to apply. Registration and Communications will develop a communications strategy and will continue to work closely with CCPS, Scottish Care and the local authority HR representative group (SPDS).

### **3. Fitness to Practise**

- 3.1 We delivered training to Robert Gordon University (RGU) law clinic so they can provide representation for registrants who can't afford representation elsewhere. The training focused on how our fitness to practise process works and we hope that involving the law clinic in this way will help us to achieve our aim of increasing representation levels at hearings.
- 3.2 We had three appeals against fitness to practise panel decisions set down for a proof diet at court in February. A proof is the hearing to consider the merits of the action. In the end only 1 case ran as a result of court time or procedural actions. However, this is noteworthy as we have had so few appeals proceed to proof over the years. To have three set to run in the same month looks like an outlier, but the situation is being monitored in case we are now entering an era where our decisions are challenged more in the courts.
- 3.3 For the first time, a decision made by one of our Hearings has been successfully challenged in court. We are waiting for the sheriff's written judgment to identify any learning or areas for improvement. While it was disappointing for the member of staff presenting the case, in my view judicial scrutiny of how we work is to be welcomed.

### **4. Corporate Governance and Hearings**

- 4.1 We have completed a trial of the clerks providing increased support in preparing decisions at panel hearings to speed up the decision-writing stage of hearings. This has involved creating smarter templates and completing some sections during the earlier stages of the hearing.
- 4.2 We have now held two impairment hearings and 15 temporary order hearings under the new rules with legally qualified chairs.
- 4.3 We are waiting for the outcome of a trial getting rid of paper casework files. If it's successful we hope to roll this out and reduce storage needs, paper use, staff time spent filing and processing.

### **5. Learning and Development Team**

- 5.1 We have secured a Scottish university partnership to deliver the undergraduate Certificate in Digital Learning Design and are working with a second institution to provide a post-graduate route to the Certificate.
- 5.2 In the last six months the careers website was viewed 3,424 times by 1,558 users. This shows it is one of the most popular resources we have and indicates a good level of interest in career pathways.

- 5.3 Over the next few months, we will work with providers of Mental Health Officer (MHO) awards and other partners to explore the potential for developing national learning materials to support MHOs' continuous professional learning. This will deliver a key recommendation from significant monitoring visits and subsequent quality assurance reports on the need to establish a national forum to support programme development and share learning.

## **6. Human Resources**

- 6.1 The HR team are working with managers to review our performance management processes to make sure it's meeting the needs of the organisation and staff.
- 6.2 With colleagues in the Finance team, we have reviewed the tender responses for new HR and payroll solution, and are in the process of awarding the contract.
- 6.3 Since 2014, 102 staff have progressed their grade as a result of a promotion or job evaluation. 88 were still employees of the SSSC at 31 January 2018. This means over a third of our current staff have had a salary increase over and above incremental progression and pay awards in the last four years.
- 6.4 Over the next few months we are hoping to implement an e-recruitment system.

## **7. Communications**

- 7.1 Raising awareness of the Codes of Practice and what the public can expect from registered workers continues with a number of activities. The Codes of Practice are now available in Easy Read, British Sign Language and five different languages and we have had more than 3,000 views of our new Codes animation ([www.sssc.uk.com/codes](http://www.sssc.uk.com/codes)) which is aimed at newly registered workers.
- 7.2 We're sending all 8,600 registered services new Codes print resources during March to raise awareness with employers, staff, people using the services and carers including information on what people using services can expect and what to do if they have concerns about a registered worker. The posters and new resources centre round the people on our Register and you can see some of the new images here on the new digital welcome pack for registrants [welcome@sssc.uk.com](mailto:welcome@sssc.uk.com).
- 7.3 Following the Scottish Government's announcement of the Empowering Schools consultation, we designed a social media awareness campaign to:
- promote our view on the proposals with clear messages for our sector and the wider audience
  - highlight the consultation, the potential impact of the proposals and our briefing

- encourage the early years sector and others with an interest to respond
  - highlight the achievements made in raising the professionalism and attainment of the early years workforce as a result of regulation and workforce development
  - raise awareness of our role in regulating early years practitioners
  - showcase our workforce development role and our learning resources for the early years sector, eg qualifications and leadership.
- 7.4 Our audiences engaged with our content on social media, particularly on Twitter with higher than average engagement including comments from the early years sector encouraging others to respond to the consultation.
- 7.5 The Communications Team works with our internal customers to advise on the best mix of channels to reach and engage our different external audiences. To reach our target audiences for the recent SSSC customer satisfaction survey, we tested using text messaging for the first time, alongside email. The text response rate resulted in 1,019 responses, a response rate of 4.3%. Following this up with an email generated a further 2,033 responses, a response rate of 6.99%. The two methods combined generated a good response overall, demonstrating that using different channels helps us to reach a wider audience. We will continue to monitor and refine the impact of the channels we use to increasingly improve engagement with our activities.
- 7.6 The new online Welcome Pack for new registrants (<http://welcome.sssc.uk.com/>) will be live on the MySSSC portal. It was developed and tested with staff and external customers and is designed to welcome people new to the Register with accessible information to help them keep their registration up to date and provide added value with information on learning resources and other products and services.

## **8. Policy and Improvement**

- 8.1 Two weeks ago we came together with representatives from several organisations (including the Care Inspectorate, SQA, Police Scotland, Creative Scotland and the Mental Welfare Commission) who are also Corporate Parents. On that day we made a series of short videos to celebrate #CareDay18. They were successfully shared on Twitter on 14, 15 and 16 February.
- 8.2 We received 3,052 responses to the customer survey we sent out to both practitioners' parts of the Register – the highest response to any survey we have had in recent years excluding the fees consultation.
- 8.3 From April to December 2017 our recycling and shredding suppliers estimate that we saved the equivalent of 131.76 trees.
- 8.4 Over the next quarter, we will be undertaking an audit/asset mapping exercise of all of our business information and intelligence, to identify the

type of information we hold and where it is, and how we can make better use of it to inform our decision-making.

## **9. Finance**

- 9.1 The SEAS system was upgraded in January/February and although there were challenges, the team managed to continue to deliver its work within the required timescales and to our usual high standards with minimal impact to other teams or workflows.
- 9.2 The transactions team has dealt with almost 12,500 calls since the beginning of January.
- 9.3 We are continuing to develop the Voluntary Sector Development Fund application system and hope to include this in the new SSSC website.

## **10. CROSS-SSSC/COLLABORATIVE WORK**

- 10.1 The Communications team is leading the development and design of our new website/MySSSC portal into a one stop shop for customers, involving staff from across the organisation. Design work is now underway following a two-day workshop in February. This phase of the work will be completed using an "agile sprint" approach by 31 March.
- 10.2 Our plain language promise to our customers continues with the Communications team developing and co-ordinating plain language learning to meet the needs of our different departments and their customers. This starts in March with the Corporate Governance and Hearings and Registration teams.
- 10.3 A team from across the organisation have done their first EFQM self assessment, this assessment will be used as a stepping stone to assess the organisation and drive improvements.
- 10.4 Colleagues from Registration and Learning and Development are delivering action learning for staff teams in Cornerstone who are developing new models of neighbourhood care / self-organising teams. We have issued a statement about SSSC registration to say that we support and will learn from these new ways of working.
- 10.5 Over the next few months, Learning and Development and Registration will hold regular operational meetings with Scottish Care and CCPS workforce leads to better respond to sector needs, in particular the "Four Rs" of Recruitment, Registration, Regulation, and Retention. These will complement the strategic grant monitoring meetings we hold with CCPS, Scottish Care and the Scottish Government.
- 10.6 Colleagues from most parts of the SSSC are collaborating on our digital transformation programme. For example, developing the case management system has "stretched some of our own levels of technical knowledge but is really interesting and exciting. We are looking forward to the projects gathering pace and involving more members of the team."

- 10.7 With support and direction from HR, Registration is trialling a new recruitment process. We are using a behavioural framework which matches up the skills and behaviours needed for a Registration Assistant post. Each applicant completes a behavioural profile which generates interview questions in relation to their answers, depending on their strengths and weaknesses. We have just started the interview process and at this stage things are going well. We will only be able to measure the true success of this new process once the successful candidates have been in post for a period of time.
- 10.8 Twenty-four hearings chaired by the new legally qualified chairs have been held since my last Council report. The Fitness to Practise and Corporate Governance and Hearings department have had to work closely to ensure the hearings run smoothly.
- 10.9 Finance and Learning and Development have worked closely with the Office of the Chief Social Work Adviser and the Coalition of Care Providers Scotland to allocate over £1 million VSDF funding.
- 10.10 The Performance and Improvement team are working with Finance (procurement) to improve the current procurement framework for temporary and agency staff. They are also working with HR to revise the SSSC's Equality and Diversity Policy and to improve the flexitime recording process.
- 10.11 We will begin work on the next version of A Trusted, Skilled and Valued Social Service Workforce. The report (formerly known as "the state of the nation"!) brings together data from Registration, Fitness to Practise and Hearings.

## **11. SSSC VALUES IN ACTION**

- 11.1 We have had to listen to and engage sensitively with our strategic partners and employers as part of our participation in the Safer Staffing Bill reference group. This is a piece of legislation which is being widely contested in terms of its relevance for social care but if it is to go ahead, we will work with others to make it as good as it can be.
- 11.2 A number of staff and also our panel members showed commitment, pride in what we do and initiative to ensure that some hearings took place and were as managed as well as they could be despite the recent winter weather.
- 11.3 Creativity and Learning: A Registration Team Leader was involved in a mock-recruitment day for Social Care and Access to Nursing students at Dundee and Angus College. The feedback we received about the day includes "The day was fantastic! Was really nervous before we started, but all in all the experience was helpful, by asking the questions that are likely to be posed at a real interview" Feedback about Registration staff includes "Very good experience, detailed questions, professional behaviour. Loved the questions, straight to the point, got lovely chat with her at lunchtime, very beneficial".

- 11.4 Listening and Engaging: The Heads of Fitness to Practise and Corporate Governance and Hearings met with a complainant to get a better understanding of the issues raised. The complaint had referred to aspects of both departments and they felt it would be better to meet face to face and listen to her perspective than rely on email. I have personally also spent time talking on the phone with a member of the public who attended a hearing because it was his mother who had been mistreated by the registrant. He was remarkably constructive in the circumstances and has asked valuable questions as well as giving very positive feedback on our staff and our organisation.
- 11.5 Listening and engaging: In March we are holding a one hour lunchtime session for SSSC staff with the Scottish Association for Mental Health (SAMH) The event will explore stigma and discrimination around mental health in the workplace. It will also look at ways to look after our mental health and wellbeing. The session is delivered by volunteers who have had lived experience of mental health issues and involves a maximum of 20 participants. We are hoping to repeat the session if there is demand.

## **12. CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S HIGHLIGHTS**

- 12.1 I don't think it counts as a "highlight", but I need to mention the recent severe weather. Although Dundee was never in a "red zone", the snow and wind were quite extreme and we decided to close the office on the Thursday afternoon and the Friday. Some staff chose to come in and I am particularly grateful to those that ensured that Hearings were well-managed.
- 12.2 It may be business as usual, but this quarter of the year always involves a great deal of work on budgets and forward planning. I would like to acknowledge the hard work of colleagues across the organisation, especially in the Performance and Improvement and Finance teams to make sure we are ready for the new financial and reporting year.
- 12.3 The end of January and start of February saw the annual Fire Starter "curated" by Scottish Government's Ingage team. It celebrates and promotes creativity in public services with events of all shapes and sizes across the whole country - 70 in total in the 2018 fortnight. I attended the silent launch at Kelvingrove Art Gallery & Museum which was opened by the First Minister and then a variety of speakers contributed from all sorts of vantage points in the museum. The delegates heard them through headphones so you could listen to some challenging and inspiring speakers while enjoying the visual stimulation of the exhibits.
- 12.4 I also participated in a Spark It Up breakfast session in Dundee where I was on a panel from the public, private and voluntary sector discussing with delegates some creative ideas to improve communities in Dundee.



- 12.5 At the end of the festival fortnight, I attended a reception in the Scottish Parliament Members restaurant hosted by Kate Forbes MSP which celebrated the huge diversity of events and participants.
- 12.6 I very much enjoyed an event jointly hosted by the SSSC and NHS Education Scotland on palliative and end of life care in Stirling. It was a good combination of speakers and workshops and I learned a lot. This is an area we are doing some great work on, and something I know relatively little about so it was good to be able to just be a delegate. It was a really good example of our collaborative work with NES - integrated working at a national level.
- 12.7 As Council Members are aware, we have embarked on a digital transformation programme which will transform how we work and how our customers engage with us. It can be hard to visualise what all the technical jargon means, so 18 of us from every part of the SSSC spent the best part of a day in Microsoft's Edinburgh base for a demonstration which really brought it alive.
- 12.8 I spent a day at the Newton Dee Camphill community near Aberdeen. This involved a visit to see first hand the service they provide to people with learning disabilities, both as residents and as day visitors. And then a meeting with representatives from most of the 11 communities across Scotland. The meeting was the first step in building a constructive relationship with and involved debunking or tackling some historic issues and misconceptions.
- 12.9 On 27 February, our Minister, Maree Todd MSP, visited our office in Dundee for the first time. It was a great success and thank you to colleagues and the Convenor for hosting.
- 12.10 On 8 and 9 March, Maree Allison and I attended the Professional Standards Authority's annual seminar which brings together health and social care professional regulators and academics. When it began there were only a handful of academics interested in regulation but now, five years on, there were around 40 academics to 50 regulators. There's a real commitment to exploring what works and what doesn't in regulation, to improve what we do and make sure it is achieving the aims of public protection and improving quality, as well as maintaining public confidence in professions.
- 12.11 Finally, I am very pleased that the SSSC had achieved the Committed to Excellence award from Quality Scotland. Thank you to everyone, particularly Liz MacKinnon, for working so hard to gather the evidence.

### **13. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 13.1 There are no resources implications arising from this report.

### **14. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

14.1 There are no equalities implications arising from this report.

## **15. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

15.1 There are no equalities implications arising from this report.

## **16. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT**

16.1 Internal stakeholders have contributed to this report. Several, if not most, of the things I have described as either were in themselves or involved considerable stakeholder engagement.

## **17. IMPACT ON USERS AND CARERS**

17.1 There is no direct impact on people who use services or their carers.

## **18. CONCLUSION**

18.1 This report contains a broad range of information about the organisation as a whole which may not be covered in other ways. However, it is a “highlights” report and is not intended to replace the reporting mechanisms in place for our Strategic and Operational Plans.

18.2 This will be my last Chief Executive's report to Council, which of course gives me pause to reflect. While our core business is very much the same, so much of how we do it has changed and improved. I am very proud of what the SSSC has achieved since I've been here and all the good work done by all of my colleagues. I am also grateful for the support of current and past Council Members. I look forward to watching the SSSC go from strength to strength over the coming years.

## **19. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

19.1 None.