

Title of report	Convener's Report
Public/confidential	Public
Action	For information
Date of Publication	Before meeting
Purpose of report	To provide a summary of the activities of the Council and Convener since the last Council meeting.
Recommendations	<p>The Council is asked to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. note and welcome the return of Lorraine Gray to her post as Chief Executive and to thank Maree Allison for her support and hard work as Acting Chief Executive over the last few months 2. endorse the summary of development sessions and away days for Council Members 3. note the summary of recent other key issues from the viewpoint of the Convener.
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Responsible Officer	<p>Name: Lorraine Gray</p> <p>Job title: Chief Executive</p> <p>Tel: 01382 207250</p>
Link to Strategic Plan	<p>Outcome 4 - Our stakeholders value our work</p> <p>Priority 6 - High standards of governance</p>
Link to the Risk Register	<p>Risk 2 - The SSSC is not able to demonstrate to our stakeholders (including Scottish Government) that its operational activity is fulfilling its strategic outcomes.</p> <p>Risk 3 - Ineffective working relationships with partner bodies impact significantly on our ability to deliver our strategic outcomes.</p>
Documents attached	None

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In accordance with the Executive Framework Document, the Convener is accountable for the overall strategic performance of the SSSC, oversight of governance and performance of the Council. Therefore, this report highlights important information that has happened since the last Council meeting on 29 October 2019.

2. ANNUAL REPORT

- 2.1 Our annual report for 2018/19 was recently published and provides a summary of progress over the year, including some challenges. This has informed the development of the Strategic Plan for 2020 to 2023, which is presented for approval at today's Council meeting.

3. CHIEF EXECUTIVE

- 3.1 The Chief Executive is expected to return to work on 20 January, on a phased basis, and will assume her Accountable Officer duties then. Thanks to Maree Allison for all her efforts during this period, particularly her support to me in my new role as Convener.

4. DEVELOPMENT SESSIONS AND COUNCIL MEMBERS AWAYDAY

- 4.1 The annual Away Days took place on 13 and 14 November. Normally these would afford the opportunity to carry out an effectiveness review of the performance of Council, but the governance review superseded this on this occasion. Instead the focus was on development needs of Council Members, together with a substantive discussion and a significant amount of the sessions was discussing the draft strategic plan and associated risks. The fact that the Members have joined the Council shortly before the Strategic Plan is due to be agreed meant that additional time was needed to get a good understanding of the challenges for the sector and relevant policy drivers which feed into the plan.
- 4.2 The days enabled wide-ranging discussion about the SSSC's role and function, which will be picked up in future Development Days, including the need for horizon scanning regarding the future of regulation, the need for SSSC to promote a positive image regarding our role in public protection and enhancement of professional development for the registered workforce, and a desire to work more closely with the Care Inspectorate. The recent issues picked up through the Investor in People report, and the identification of a Council Member lead for whistleblowing were also discussed.
- 4.3 The Development Day on 18 December was a very busy session, covering the Strategic Plan and Risk Register, following up from discussions at the Away Days, the focus on this being necessary due to the recent changes in Council membership in the period leading up to the production of the final Strategic Plan, which comes to the January Council meeting for approval. The Development Day also afforded the opportunity to hear from our Sponsor team (the Office of the Chief Social Work Adviser) on the links between the SSSC and the Scottish Government's current programme, as well as a re-iteration of the role of the Sponsor team. We were very

fortunate to also welcome Angiolina Foster, Chief Executive of NHS24 who shared her experience and learning regarding leading an organisation through a period of review.

5. GOVERNANCE REVIEW

- 5.1 Council approved changes to governance structure in October and the newly configured Audit and Assurance Committee in December was the first proper test of the new arrangements. There will be items on the agenda related to this Committee meeting, but initial feedback from Members has been positive. The new governance arrangements are a continuing work in progress for the time being, but the introduction of the assurance report drawing together performance, finance and risk has been welcome.

6. CONVENER ACTIVITIES

- 6.1 I have met regularly with our Sponsor, the Chief Social Work Adviser, who together with her team, have provided invaluable advice on issues related to the governance of SSSC. Other topics of discussion have included the uncertainty of public funding and how this may impact on the SSSC in future years, the development and focus on the Strategic Plan and the wider issues related to the health and social care sector.
- 6.2 I met with the Minister on 28 November, and the very positive discussion again reflected the wider context in which the SSSC operates.
- 6.3 The representation of the SSSC on the Ministerial Steering Group for Health and Community Care is to resume, with myself as Convener having been accepted onto the Group, the first meeting of which is on 22 January.
- 6.4 The Chief Executive and I are meeting with Scotland's Chief Social Work Officers on 16 January and it's anticipated that the main topic will be Fitness to Practise arrangements. I hope to be able to report verbally on this at the Council meeting.
- 6.5 A significant issue arising from the Section 22 report was the review of our Shared Services with the Care Inspectorate. The outcome of this is important for the SSSC and the Care Inspectorate and it has been agreed that this will be taken forward in a collaborative process in order to ensure that the outcome addresses the needs of both organisations.
- 6.6 In December I had the opportunity to observe a Fitness to Practise Hearing and to provide some observations on the process as a result. This was invaluable to me, given the recurring theme raised by registered staff and managers and is a subject in which I will retain a keen interest.
- 6.7 In November I was invited to meet with staff at North Edinburgh Childcare, and spent a very enjoyable time hearing from staff about their understanding and views of the SSSC role. I feel it is important going forward that we are outward-facing and find ways to enhance our relationship with the registered workforce, a theme which will recur over the next three years.

- 6.8 On 4 December I attended the Health and Social Care Scotland conference in Glasgow. This afforded the opportunity to meet others working in health and social care and hear about new initiatives. For me, the key learning point was the importance of the continued journey towards integrated health and social care, and this is something to which the Council will return in future discussions, to ensure that we are horizon-scanning and adapting our organisation to take account of likely policy direction.
- 6.9 On 6 November I attended a New Board Member Induction Workshop run by the Scottish Government. This is a requirement of all new board members, and I found it very useful and informative.
- 6.10 I welcome feedback on these activities and suggestions on how I can work with Council Members to maximise our impact across key partnerships, through focused collaboration. The Council will return to this topic in a future Development session.

7. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no resource implications arising from this report.

8. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no equalities implications arising from this report.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

10. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

- 10.1 Internal stakeholders have contributed to this report and the report aims to include a regular update to external stakeholders of matters of relevance to the SSSC.

11 IMPACT ON USERS AND CARERS

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

12. SUSTAINABILITY

- 12.1 There are no direct sustainability implications arising from this report.

13. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 13.1 Welcome the return of the Chief Executive and thank Maree Allison for her role in the interim period.
- 13.2 Endorse the summary of the Away Days and Development Sessions.

- 13.3 Endorse the Governance Review update.
- 13.4 Note the summary of activities by the Convener.
- 13.5 Note the summary of recent other key issues from the viewpoint of the Convener.