

SCOTTISH SOCIAL SERVICES COUNCIL

**Unconfirmed minutes of the Scottish Social Services Council held on
Monday 28 February 2022 at 10:00 am by Teams meeting.**

Present: Sandra Campbell, Convener
Professor Alan Baird, Council Member
Paul Edie, Council Member
Julie Grace, Council Member
Lynne Huckerby, Council Member
Rona King, Council Member
Linda Lennie, Council Member
Peter Murray, Council Member
Russell Pettigrew, Council Member

In attendance: Lorraine Gray, Chief Executive
Maree Allison, Director of Regulation
Laura Lamb, Acting Director of Development and Innovation
Lynn Murray, Interim Director of Finance and Resources
Laura Shepherd, Director of Strategy and Performance
Anne Garness, Head of Legal and Corporate Governance
Audrey Wallace, Corporate Governance Coordinator

Observing: The meeting was live streamed, and the link shared with
SSSC staff and members of the public

1. Welcome

1.1 Sandra Campbell welcomed those present to the meeting, including those observing.

2. Apologies

2.1 Theresa Allison submitted apologies.

3. Declarations of interest

3.1 There were no declarations of interest.

4. Minutes of the previous meeting

4.1 Council approved the minutes of 25 November 2021 as an accurate record.

5. Matters arising

5.1 There were no matters arising from the minutes which were not included elsewhere on the agenda.

6. Convener's report

- 6.1 Sandra Campbell presented report 01/2022 which summarised her activities as Convener since the last scheduled Council meeting in November 2021.
- 6.2 She also asked Members to consider her proposal for future meetings and a possible hybrid model. Any decision about hybrid meetings would be subject to any future changes in public health guidance but, following the latest guidance, where meetings can take place in-person then they should do. The Convener stressed that over the course of the pandemic, business has continued to be conducted effectively remotely however, it was noted that face to face meetings are preferable where possible and benefits include more effective team building. There was some discussion around equality of access and Members were reminded that it is a duty of the SSSC to ensure equality of access regardless of face-to-face or online meetings.
- 6.3 Discussion turned to the number of meetings which Members will be expected to attend in person rather than online. After clarification it was agreed that 50% of formal scheduled meetings and 50% of scheduled development sessions should be attended in person by any Member invited to the meeting or session. Any difficulty in achieving this would be subject to the Convener's agreement. Members will review this arrangement after one year in operation. Other bodies' experiences would also help provide learning on best practice.
- 6.4 Lorraine Gray reminded Members that the wider public health issue should be uppermost in their minds. Anyone who had circumstances which meant they did not feel that attendance in person was suitable for them should not feel compelled to do so. It was agreed that the Convener's discretion would cover such scenarios.
- 6.5 The Council
1. noted the summary of the key issues and activities covered in the report
 2. agreed the format for holding future meetings and development sessions in a hybrid format:
 - Members should attend, in person, 50% of formal scheduled meetings and 50% of scheduled development sessions, to which they are invited, subject to the Convener's discretion where she is made aware of individual circumstances
 - Council will review this arrangement after one year in operation, commencing with the May 2022 cycle of meetings (ie financial year 2022/23). This format is subject to earlier review if there's a change in public health guidance.

7. Chief Executive's report

7.1 Lorraine Gray presented report 02/2022 which detailed the SSSC's key performance against strategic priorities as well as the work of the directorates.

7.2 The following areas were highlighted and discussed:

- Lorraine Gray confirmed that although the official report had not yet been received, the SSSC has gained the Investors in People Gold Award and had been encouraged to apply for the Platinum Award. We had also been encouraged to apply for the Investors in Wellbeing Award and this would be further looked into. The full report would be received in the next few weeks and highlights reported to Council in May.
- In response to a query about several forthcoming external engagement events, Lorraine Gray advised Members that there would be a full discussion session in or around May for Council Members. At that time all the relevant information will be brought together and shared. Members welcomed this and noted that the Convener had attended the most recent engagement session in Edinburgh.
- Laura Lamb clarified the roles of temporary workers and volunteers who would be moving into supporting care services. She advised that this was an initial step of a wider piece of work on induction for new entrants to the workforce. The temporary workers and volunteers were those already in the care sector but moving into frontline services.
- Lorraine Gray advised that there was no date given yet for the update on outcomes of the National Care Service review, it was anticipated that this would be available in March. She said that the extension of the Shortage Occupation List (SOL) to include health and care workers would have minimum impact on the work of the SSSC as additional workers would apply and be processed as normal.
- Lorraine Gray responded to a query about the use of the workforce data in assisting in assessing required competencies for the future workforce. While this data will be useful one of the main issues for learning and developing in the workforce was use of the minimum salary rate for workers. The SSSC is limited in lobbying against this as the regulator for the sector.

7.3 The Council

1. noted and commented on the information on the content of the report
2. noted an exceptionally busy period for the organisation.

8. Audit and Assurance Committee report to Council

8.1 Alan Baird presented report 03/2023 from the Audit and Assurance Committee meeting of 03 February 2022, along with the assurance

report which was submitted to the Committee and the draft minutes of the meeting.

- 8.2 He highlighted the two internal audit reports which were presented on the areas of Workforce Planning and Development and HR Data and Performance Management. Both reports gave a good level of assurance. He also confirmed that two areas of risk had been reduced in the Risk Register, signalling progress in strengthening our digital performance.
- 8.3 Following a question regarding staff turnover, it was noted that staff turnover was generally low and this figure was not a risk or cause for concern. Exact details were not available to hand but confirmed that this number of leavers reported (six) was not a risk.
- 8.4 There was discussion around the categories of risk appended to SSSC activities and it was agreed that these were discussed at the away day in January and although will be kept under review, should not be changed at this time. The Convener reiterated that the Audit and Assurance Committee regularly reviews these and any changes will be discussed there.
- 8.5 The Council:
1. accepted that the assurance report presents a true and fair view of the SSSC's performance towards achievement of strategic objectives, financial management and risk identification and management. In particular that
 - a. operational performance as measured by strategic key performance indicators give confidence that the SSSC was delivering as forecasted to meet its strategic objectives as agreed with the Sponsor Department
 - b. financial performance was consistent with forecasted spend and presents no cause for concern relating to year-end outturn of approved budget
 - c. operational delivery and financial expenditure were consistent
 2. took sufficient assurances from the internal audit reports, the management's audit report, and the 2022/23 internal audit plan
 3. approved the revised Risk Appetite Statement and Risk Register which were attached at Appendices 3 and 4 to the report
 4. noted
 - a. approval of the external audit plan for 2021/22
 - b. the progress on assurance mapping
 - c. approval of the revised Financial Regulations and the Debt Management Policy
 - d. that the Committee took assurances that there were no instances of fraud or corruption detected in the period 1 October to 31 December 2021.

9. Draft budget 2022/23 and indicative budgets for 2023/24 and 2024/25

- 9.1 Lynn Murray presented report 04/2022 along with appendices showing the 2022/23 draft budget, breakdown of staffing requirements, breakdown of budget priorities and indicative budgets for 2023/24 and 2024/25. She gave a presentation, at Appendix 3 to the report, on the high-level figures for the 2022/23 budget as well as indicative predictions and scenarios for 2023/24 and 2024/25.
- 9.2 Lynn Murray highlighted figures and budget areas of significance including potential use of reserves and use of office space. She also spoke to the indicative figures for future years and how these are estimated. Members asked Lynn Murray to identify in the budget paper for consideration on 25 March, high level areas that would potentially be affected if we do not receive sufficient funding in future years. Examples could include where, if there was insufficient funding for the Future Proofing Programme, what type of Business as Usual (BAU) work and project work would not be carried out.
- 9.3 One further area of interest discussed was with regard to possible savings on the cost of office space, once the lease expires on the current headquarters building. Members noted that the Chief Executive was preparing to put a robust funding case to Michael Chalmers, the Director of Children and Families, Scottish Government at her forthcoming meeting with him.
- 9.4 Council members also asked Lynn Murray to outline savings and efficiencies that we have made as well as identifying potential efficiencies, ranked in priority order, for the next meeting to be held in March. They asked whether there are additional funds available for the outcomes of the National Care Service review and Lynn Murray advised that we are at too early a stage for funding to be available.
- 9.5 The Council
1. considered and commented on the draft budget for 2022/23. Scottish Government has agreed to fund a deficit budget of £1.638m as an unfunded pressure this year (at Appendix 1 to the report)
 2. considered and commented on the indicative budgets for 2023/24 of £0.787m deficit and 2024/25 £0.319m deficit (at Appendix 1 to the report)
 3. considered and commented on the proposed staffing establishment changes set out in paragraphs 17 to 19 of the report
 4. considered and commented on the considerations for projected general reserves and risks to the budget
 5. requested further information on areas potentially affected if funding is not available and efficiencies we have made and could make at the next meeting to be held on 25 March 2022.

10. Review of SSSC Corporate Governance Framework

- 10.1 Anne Garness presented report 05/2022 which sought approval of the revised Executive Framework and Code of Corporate Governance as well as approval for revised reporting dates for some annual reports, to allow more evenly spread Council business. Revising these dates would have no impact on the matters reported.
- 10.2 Members agreed minor amendments to the wording in the Code of Corporate Governance to ensure it covers facilitating access to all people wishing to attend meetings remotely or in person. This will correspond to the agreement with paragraph 6.2 above, regarding attendance at hybrid meetings.
- 10.3 The Council
1. approved the Executive Framework and authorised the Chief Executive to finalise it with the Scottish Government
 2. approved the proposed amendments to the Code of Corporate Governance subject to minor amendments discussed above
 3. approved the revised reporting dates for the Digital Development, Information Governance, Partnership Agreement and Shared Services annual reports outlined in the Council Calendar of Business
 4. noted the annual effectiveness review and new Scheme of Delegation for staff.

11. Annual Report and Accounts timeline

- 11.1 Anne Garness presented report 06/2022 which proposed the timeline, shown below, for preparation and approval of the Annual Report and Accounts for this year and future years, subject to future review if necessary.
- 11.2
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| Quarter 1 cycle –
A&A Committee
meeting | Committee approves its draft annual committee report.
Committee approves the draft annual governance statement. |
| Quarter 2 cycle –
Council meeting | Draft annual report and accounts presented to Council for comments. |
| September – A&A
Committee meeting | Committee makes recommendations to Council on the annual report and accounts. |
| October – Council
meeting | Final approval by Council of the annual accounts and endorsement of the annual report. |
| December | Annual report and accounts laid before Scottish Parliament. |
- 11.3 The Council
1. approved the proposed timeline for preparation of the annual report and accounts for this year and future years.

12. SSSC Code of Conduct for Members

- 12.1 Anne Garness presented report 07/2022 which asked Council to approve the new SSSC Code of Conduct for Members (the Code). The wording at paragraph 5.4 of the Code was noted, relating specifically to the roles of the Convener and the Chair of the board of the Care Inspectorate (the Board). Paul Edie confirmed that this would also be considered at the next meeting of the Board.
- 12.2 Anne Garness answered comments on the changes to the Code concerning register of interests and gifts and hospitality.
- 12.3 The Council
1. approved the new SSSC Code of Conduct for Members.

13. People Strategy delivery plan: progress update

- 13.1 Lynn Murray presented report 08/2022 which gave an update on the progress of the People Strategy delivery plan.
- 13.2 Members commented favourably on the clear reporting format of the strategy progress as at 31 January 2022, at Appendix 1 to the report. The Convener also advised that there were regular updates to staff which were also accessible to Members.
- 13.3 The Council
1. endorsed the update as at 31 January 2022.

14. Council Action Record

- 14.1 The Council considered and approved the Council action record and agreed that completed actions C61, C76, C83, C84, C85, C87, C88, C89 and C90 be archived and filed for future reference.

15. Date and time of next meeting

- 15.1 The date of the next Council meeting will be Friday 25 March 2022 at 10.00am for budget approval only. This meeting will be held as a trial of the hybrid format.
- 15.2 The next meeting for usual Council business will be Thursday 26 May at 10.00am.

Council 28 February 2022

Start time: 10 am

Finish time: 12.15pm

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____

Sandra Campbell
Convener