

Title of report	Chief Executive's Report
Public/Confidential	Public
Summary/purpose of report	To provide Council Members with an update from the Acting Chief Executive.
Recommendations	The Council is asked to note the information contained in the report and offer comment on the content.
Author and Responsible Officer	Maree Allison, Acting Chief Executive
Link to Strategic Plan	<p>The information in this report links to:</p> <p>Outcome 1: People who use services are protected by ensuring the regulated workforce is fit to practise.</p> <p>Outcome 2: The SSSC supports and enhances the development of the registered workforce to deliver high standards of practice and drive improvement.</p> <p>Outcome 3: Our workforce planning activities support employers, commissioners and policy makers to deliver a sustainable, integrated and innovative workforce.</p> <p>Outcome 4: The social work, social care and early years workforce is recognised as professional and regulated and valued for the difference it makes to people's lives.</p>
Link to Risk Register	<p>Risk 1: We fail to ensure that our system of regulation meets the needs of people who use services and workers.</p> <p>Risk 2: We fail to ensure that our workforce development function supports the workforce and employers to achieve the rights standards and qualifications to gain and maintain registration.</p> <p>Risk 3: We fail to meet corporate governance, external scrutiny and legal obligations.</p>

	<p>Risk 4: We fail to provide value to stakeholders and demonstrate our impact.</p> <p>Risk 5: We fail to develop and support SSSC staff appropriately to ensure we have a motivated and skilled workforce or have insufficient staff resources to achieve our strategic outcomes.</p> <p>Risk 6: The SSSC fails to secure sufficient budget resources to fulfil the financial plans required to deliver the strategic plan.</p> <p>Risk 7: Business Continuity Plans (BCP) are in place and tested.</p> <p>Risk 8: We fail to have the appropriate measures in place to protect against cyber security attacks.</p>
Impact assessments	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. An Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) was not required. 2. A Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) was not required. 3. A Sustainability Impact Assessment (SIA) was not required.
Documents attached	None
Background papers	None

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. As set out in the Executive Framework Document agreed by Scottish Government and the SSSC, the Chief Executive is accountable for the operational performance of the SSSC and responsible for organisational governance. This report provides an assessment of performance, highlights important information that has happened since the last Council meeting on 25 August 2022, and looks forward to emerging issues.

INTRODUCTION

2. This is a time of challenge, change and opportunity for the sector and the SSSC. Over the last three months I have focused on responding to the National Care Service Bill and engaging with the Independent Review of Inspection, Scrutiny and Regulation (IRISR) announced by Scottish Government in October. I gave evidence to the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee on the National Care Service Bill on 15 November, and along with the Convener met with the Chair of the IRISR and then Mr Stewart, the Minister. We are preparing a response to the call for evidence from the IRISR which I will discuss with Members at the away days on 28 and 29 November.
3. I have also attended a number of meetings with our fellow social work and social care regulators across the UK. Our links with our regulatory colleagues are important for sharing best practice and challenges. I attended the Social Work Scotland Conference, Professional Standards Authority Conference, and with Laura Lamb the Social Service Awards.
4. The Future Proofing Programme has reached a significant milestone and is reported later the agenda. The proposals reflect extensive positive engagement with stakeholders.
5. The pay award for staff and our budget for next year is the other area which is of the highest priority. The financial environment is challenging and we are working closely with Sponsor on this area.

OUTCOME 1: PEOPLE WHO USE SERVICES ARE PROTECTED BY ENSURING THE REGULATED WORKFORCE IS FIT TO PRACTISE

6. The Scottish Government regulatory conference, 'Looking to the future' took place on 24 October 2022. The SSSC was well represented. I was on the panel alongside John Barwick of the Health Care Professions Council and Nick Jones of the General Chiropractic Council discussing how health and social care regulation learn from the pandemic. Hannah Coleman, Head of Regulatory Improvement and Hearings co-presented a session about the move to online fitness to practise. Chris Weir, Acting Director of Regulation co-presented a session about intelligent, efficient and

compassionate regulation, focusing on the introduction of opt-in hearings, which is a unique approach amongst regulators.

7. Chris Weir spoke on a Panel discussion at the Law Society of Scotland's annual conference on 22 October 2022 about the challenges of training trainees in a hybrid work environment across the legal profession. Cheryl Campbell, Head of Registration also attended the Capability Scotland Conference in October and was a keynote speaker at the Scottish Out of School Network Conference.
8. The agreement by Scottish Government to fund SSSC registration fees for those employed by local authorities has required the Registration Department and Finance and Systems Development teams to conduct urgent work to enable us to manage a changed fees process.
9. The performance around our regulatory processes is contained in the Assurance Report and I want to highlight that over the last quarter the Fitness to Practise Department has reduced its caseload to below 2,000 cases. At one time the Department held over 3,500 cases. This reduction is a significant achievement and reflection of the investment in the Department and policy decisions made by Council.
10. All new registrants are now encouraged to complete a 'New to SSSC Registration' Open Badge which helps them understand what it means to be professionally regulated. Since its launch in July over 100 people have made submissions for the badge, which is a very high level of uptake for an optional open badge.
11. The Regulatory Improvement and Hearings Department introduced a telephone support service for people going through the fitness to practise process at the end of May. The first report shows that in the first quarter 45 workers contacted the service, resulting in 17 clinical assessments, 13 single sessions and four structured sessions of counselling. 15 people created accounts enabling them to access online support services. Over time we intend rolling this service out to other people involved in the fitness to practise process.

OUTCOME 2: THE SSSC SUPPORTS AND ENHANCES THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE REGULATED WORKFORCE TO DELIVER HIGH STANDARDS OF PRACTICE AND DRIVE IMPROVEMENT

12. In partnership with key stakeholders we continue to lead the refresh of the Common Core of Skills, Knowledge, Understanding and Values for the Children's Workforce in Scotland and implementation plan as part of our commitment to keeping The Promise. We are holding a Common Core 'deep dive' session with the Scottish Government Children and Families Leadership Group on 14 November 2022.

13. We have held four in-person and two virtual 'Codes Conversation' events to inform our review of the Codes of Practice. We have established a short life working group of key stakeholders to assist with writing the new Codes based on analysis of the stakeholder engagement and feedback from the events and our online resource.
14. We have successfully recruited and selected candidates working in social services for our funded places on cohorts 42 and 43 of the Scottish Improvement Leaders programme. Candidates start in December 2022 and January 2023.
15. Applications for the voluntary sector development fund (VSDF) have now closed. We received applications from 76 organisations. Priority groups for funding are workers in housing support and care at home services. The selection panel will decide on allocation and disbursement of 2022/23 funding this month.

OUTCOME 3: OUR WORKFORCE PLANNING ACTIVITIES SUPPORT EMPLOYERS, COMMISSIONERS AND POLICY MAKERS TO DELIVER A SUSTAINABLE AND INTEGRATED AND INNOVATIVE WORKFORCE

16. On behalf of Scottish Government we are developing a practical guide for employers to support recruitment of Ukrainian refugees. In partnership with the Scottish Refugee Council (SRC) we delivered a series of six Refugee Awareness and Employability sessions between August and October. The demand was so high that a further three sessions are being organised. We are also supporting the SRC to develop an induction guide for employers.
17. In partnership with Social Work Scotland we held a series of engagement events with social workers, MHO providers, employers and workforce planners to inform the workforce plan underpin the Scottish Government Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
18. Our latest joint SSSC/CI vacancies report is due for publication on 22 November 2022. The report reflects the recruitment and retention challenges currently faced by the sector which we can see in our live registration data, with a reduction in overall workforce numbers particularly in adult social care. The only part of the workforce that has seen an increase is day care of children.
19. Using our workforce data we are supporting Public Health Scotland and Scottish Government to understand covid vaccination uptake of staff within care homes.

OUTCOME 4: THE SOCIAL WORK, SOCIAL CARE AND EARLY YEARS WORKFORCE IS RECOGNISED AS PROFESSIONAL AND REGULATED AND VALUED FOR THE DIFFERENCE IT MAKES TO PEOPLE'S LIVES

20. We held a development session for Council Members to support delivery of our involving people framework. Colleagues from the Health and Social Care Alliance and the Coalition of Carers in Scotland attended to present to members and discuss the challenges and opportunities in the delivery of social care services in Scotland.

HIGH PERFORMING ORGANISATION

21. Colleagues from SEPA are holding a session with the Digital Team to help us better understand the challenges SEPA has faced due to the cyber-attack they experienced in December 2021. This session will look at how SEPA have recovered from the attack and they will pass on any lessons learned to help us mitigate against future situations.
22. A new cyber-security research centre has opened at Abertay University in Dundee and the SSSC became a founding partner along with other public sector organisations. Benefits of becoming a founding partner include access to state-of-the-art office, meeting and event space in Dundee, developing close links with academia and other employers (both public and private sector), access to exclusive partner learning events, networking opportunities, and the opportunity to attract graduate and post-graduate talent to the SSSC with expertise in cybersecurity. This is being delivered alongside our internal 'exercise in the box' business continuity exercise looking at our incident management plans.
23. With the development of a National Care Service, a National Social Work Agency, NHS Education Scotland's widening of role into social care and the IRISR it is essential that stakeholders have a clear understanding of the SSSC role and functions. The Directorate name Development and Innovation no longer reflects the accuracy of the role and functions of the SSSC. After internal and external consultation with key stakeholders EMT agreed to rename Development and Innovation to Workforce, Education and Standards. The job titles of the senior management in the directorate also change to reflect this, becoming Director of Workforce, Education and Standards, Head of Education and Standards and Head of Workforce Policy and Planning.
24. Investors in People shortlisted us for the Gold Employer of the Year award in our size category, recognising the work over the last few years in moving the SSSC from silver to gold. We successfully launched our learning management system, SSSC Learning Hub in August. We are now looking at how we further integrate and develop the system to support our learning culture and agile working. We launched our Managing the SSSC

Way learning journey in October for all newly recruited or promoted managers, following a pilot earlier this year. We will gather feedback from the first cohort to refine and develop the journey over time.

25. The Executive Management Team of SSSC and the Senior Leadership Team of the Care Inspectorate agreed to dissolve the Joint Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee on the recommendation of its members, reflecting the different challenges and SSSC will establish its own Committee.

HORIZON SCANNING

26. **National Care Service (NCS):** The National Care Service (Scotland) Bill is at Stage 1. I participated in the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee's session on 15 November. It is anticipated that Stage 1 will complete by 17 March 2023.
27. **IRISR:** The IRISR has several aims, such as exploring how regulation and inspection of social care services and partners who contribute to care and wellbeing can be effectively supported to improve outcomes and experiences for the people of Scotland. The IRISR has issued a call for evidence and responses are due by 23 December. The review will finish in June 2023 with the publication of recommendations.
28. **Education Reform:** The Scottish Government's consultation on the next steps for improving and streamlining the inspection of ELC and school age childcare services ended in October 2022. The consultation followed on from a recommendation in Professor Muir's report setting out a future vision for Scottish Education. The Scottish Government will publish an analysis of the responses and confirmation of the intended next steps.
29. **Incorporating the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) into Scots law:** The Scottish Parliament will reconsider the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Incorporation) (Scotland) Bill before the end of the calendar year.

CONSULTATION

30. Internal stakeholders have contributed to this report. This report also provides information on how we are working with partners and stakeholders to support the sector at this time.

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

31. Impact assessments for equalities, data protection and sustainability were not required.

CONCLUSION

32. This report provides Council Members with updates of matters of strategic importance and demonstrates how we are working to fulfil our statutory obligations during this time.
33. This is my final report as Acting Chief Executive and I look forward to welcoming Lorraine Gray back in December. I want to take this opportunity to thank staff and Members for their support over the last six months.