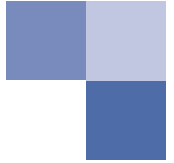


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**Scottish Social Services Council
Strategic Plan 2017 – 2020**

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SSSC STRATEGIC PLAN 2017-2020

1. ABOUT THE SSSC

The Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) is the regulator for the social service workforce in Scotland.

Vision

Our work means the people of Scotland can count on social services being provided by a trusted, skilled and confident workforce.

What we do

We protect the public by registering social service workers, setting standards for their practice, conduct, training and education and by supporting their professional development. Where people fall below the standards of practice and conduct we can investigate and take action.

We:

- publish the national codes of practice for people working in social services and their employers
- register people working in social services and make sure they adhere to our codes of practice

- promote and regulate the learning and development of the social service workforce
- are the national lead for workforce development and planning for social services in Scotland.

Strategic outcomes

1. The right people are on the Register
2. Our standards lead to a safe and skilled social service workforce
3. Our resources support the professional development of the social service workforce
4. Our stakeholders value our work

Values

Integrity

Commitment

Accountability

Pride in what we do

Listening and engaging

Creativity and learning





2. OUR PLANS FOR THE NEXT THREE YEARS

In 2017, the SSSC will mark its 16th birthday. In the last 16 years we have seen significant changes in the social service sector and the SSSC. We will continue to review how we work and adapt to the changes. However we will never lose sight of our role in protecting people who use services and strengthening the professionalism of the workforce.

This strategic plan for 2017-2020 sets out our strategic priorities for the next three years. We will begin this period with over 100,000 people on the Register and by 2020 we expect to have over 150,000 registered.

We will work to ensure that people who use social services, social service workers and their employers are confident in the service we provide and value the work of the SSSC.

In the period of our last strategic plan we have seen growth in all our areas of work. The number of people registered, using our learning resources, reading our newsletter, attending our events and the SSSC has also grown. And the growth in the Register has meant us carrying out more investigations.

In the last year, we completed our review of social

work education, launched the new Codes of Practice and widely consulted on and publicised our new thresholds for fitness to practise referrals.

The biggest change, which has been welcomed, is our move to a fitness to practise model, as opposed to a conduct model, of regulation. This will allow us to focus on the cases where there is the greatest risk to people who use services.

Now more than ever, it is important that workers across social services have the knowledge and skills to provide high standards of care. We will develop resources to support workforce development, working in partnership with key stakeholders, focusing in particular on the actions set out in the Scottish Government's 'Social Services in Scotland – a shared vision and strategy 2015–2020' and the wider strategic context set out in that strategy, digitally enabled learning, leadership development and career-long learning.

Our strategic plan is based on delivering our legislative functions. It is also informed by research with our customers, recent feedback from consultations and discussion forums. This feedback



has highlighted a number of additional areas of focus for us over the next three years.

- In our recent consultations it was apparent that a small but significant number of registrants misunderstood their relationship with their regulatory body. We will communicate our role more clearly and consistently so that registrants better understand their relationship with us.
- We will clearly demonstrate the benefits of registration and its role in increasing the professionalism of the workforce and its core purpose of the protecting people who use services.
- Our regulatory function is viewed by some as legalistic with little focus on protecting people who use services and insufficient support for workers and witnesses. We need to better understand these views and identify where improvements are needed to address these concerns.
- Qualifications and standards are an integral part of professionalising the workforce. We reviewed the Code of Practice in 2016 as part of ensuring that we have the right standards. We

need to maintain our focus on ensuring that the qualifications remain fit for purpose.

- Many of our stakeholders, in particular registrants, see us solely as a regulator and seem less aware of our role in workforce development. The tools and resources we produce must be focused on improving practice and address the changing needs of the profession.

In the last three years we have started to address a number of the issues identified and we will give them greater priority over the next three years.





3. STRATEGIC OUTCOMES AND STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- Outcome 1** The right people are on the Register
- Priority 1** Build our relationship with registrants and employers
- Priority 2** Our fitness to practise process is proportionate and accessible
- Outcome 2** Our standards lead to a safe and skilled social service workforce
- Priority 3** Social service qualifications and standards meet the needs of learners and employers
- Outcome 3** Our resources support the professional development of the social service workforce
- Priority 4** We work with Scottish Government and other partners to deliver the actions in 'Social Services in Scotland a shared vision and strategy 2015-2020'
- Outcome 4** Our stakeholders value our work
- Priority 5** A customer focus throughout the organisation
- Priority 6** High standards of governance



STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1

Build our relationship with registrants and employers

We will work to make sure our registrants value their registration. We will do this by developing MySSSC, engaging with the workforce and employers and providing better targeted information and resources to registrants.

Our work between 2017-2020

- MySSSC becomes a one stop shop and registration is more personalised for the individual.
- Our learning resources are developed based on the intelligence we hold and market research with registrants and employers.
- We manage the registration of the new groups – support workers in care at home and housing support.
- We achieve efficiencies in our processes by developing our online offering through MySSSC.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2

Our fitness to practise process is proportionate and accessible

This work has started with our move to a fitness to practise approach. Ensuring that we receive the right referrals so that resources are focused on where action is required is an important part of maintaining a proportionate model.

Our work between 2017-2020

- Work with employers and registered workers to help them understand when and how to make a referral.
- Work to improve the support received by social service workers, employers, complainants and witnesses during the fitness to practise investigations and hearings.
- Introduce paperless hearings and develop MySSSC to facilitate correspondence with workers and employers.
- Further reduce the time it takes to conclude a case.





STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3

Social service qualifications and standards meet the needs of learners and employers

We provide support, guidance and advice to education and training providers to make sure the quality and standard of education and learning are maintained and enhanced. We have links with higher education institutions, further education colleges and other providers to ensure compliance with SSSC rules and requirements. The period of this strategic plan will see us working in partnership to implement a number of the recommendations of the Review of Social Work Education.

Our work between 2017-2020

- Promote the revised Codes of Practice so that they are used and understood by registrants and employers.
- Work in partnership with learning providers to review the quality assurance and approval process to ensure it is proportionate and effective.
- Work in partnership with Skills Development Scotland and others to develop career pathways

for social services and across social care and health services.

- Ensure that our digital learning expertise, capacity and capability is scaled up both internally within the SSSC and with our strategic partners, to ensure that our work in this area is future proof and sustainable.
- Contribute to the work of the National Occupational Standards Governance group in the development of the transition plan and five year strategic plan.
- Implementing the agreed recommendations of the Review of Social Work Education.
- Supporting the agreed workforce recommendations arising from significant policy developments such as the Scottish Government's review of the care system.
- Reviewing post-registration training and learning (PRTL) to provide a more effective framework for maintaining and improving practice and strengthening development of the workforce.



STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4

We work with Scottish Government and other partners to deliver the actions in 'Social Services in Scotland: a shared vision and strategy 2015-2020'

Our work between 2017-2020

- Working together with our strategic partners to further embed and implement the Social Services Leadership Strategy and Step into Leadership.
- Implement the SSSC Learning Strategy and seek opportunities to strengthen our capacity to support wider development of the workforce in addition to the qualifications required for registration.
- Continue to work with Scottish Government and other stakeholders in supporting areas of policy and legislation that impact on the capabilities and knowledge needs of the workforce such as self-directed support, carers, dementia, early years, community justice and end of life care.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY 5

A customer focus throughout the organisation

Most people have very little choice about whether they have contact with the SSSC. But our aim is that if they did have a choice of regulator they would choose the SSSC. This is linked to all aspects of our work but we must improve how we collect customer insights, the experiences people have when dealing with us and have consistency throughout the organisation.

Our work between 2017-2020

- Make better use of intelligence (feedback, complaints, surveys) to inform our decisions.
- Improve how we evaluate the impact of what we do and demonstrate the difference we make.
- Develop and implement our Digital Strategy.
- Upskill our staff with digital skills to better serve our customers.
- Develop and implement a customer care programme for all staff.
- Implement a quality management framework.





STRATEGIC PRIORITY 6

High standards of governance

In implementing this strategy over the next three years we will continue to ensure good governance and planning to make the best use of all our resources.

Our work between 2017-2020

- Put in place a financial strategy that addresses the sustainability of the SSSC.
- Implement paperless financial transactions.
- Ensure our staff are competent to deliver our priorities and manage risk.
- Have in place an online performance and governance system.

4. OUR STRATEGIC MEASURES 2017-2020

- Registrants believe that registration with the SSSC provides positive benefits to them.
- Cases referred to SSSC Fitness to Practise meet the thresholds. This will allow us to focus on the high risk cases.
- We see an increase in the number of people participating in and being represented at Fitness to Practise hearings.
- We see a decrease in the average time it takes to conclude fitness to practise cases.
- The SSSC is recognised as an organisation that contributes to social service workers having the skills needed for their jobs.
- Social service workers report that our learning resources have improved their practice.
- Our customers are satisfied with the service they receive from the SSSC.
- External audits provide evidence of good corporate governance and effective use of our resources.

5. OUR WORK AND THE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT OUTCOMES

Our strategic outcome	Our strategic priorities	Our strategic measures	The difference we will make	Scottish Government outcomes
<p>Outcome 1 The right people are on the Register</p>	<p>Priority 1 Build our relationship with registrants and employers</p>	<p>Registrants believe that registration with the SSSC provides positive benefits to them</p>	<p>Registrants understand and value the role of the SSSC in enhancing their professionalism</p>	<p>We have improved the life chances for children, young people and families at risk</p> <p>Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs</p>
	<p>Priority 2 Our fitness to practise process is proportionate and accessible</p>	<p>Registrants believe that registration with the SSSC provides positive benefits to them</p> <p>Cases referred to the SSSC Fitness to Practise meet the thresholds</p> <p>We see an increase in the number of people attending and represented at Fitness to Practise Hearings</p> <p>We see a decrease in the average time it takes to conclude fitness to practise investigations</p>	<p>People who use services are protected and receive high quality services from a safe and skilled workforce</p> <p>Our stakeholders recognise that we have a vital role to investigate and take action in respect of workers who pose a risk to people who use services</p>	<p>Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs</p> <p>We live our lives safe from crime, disorder and danger</p>

OUR WORK AND THE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT OUTCOMES

Our strategic outcome	Our strategic priorities	Our strategic measures	The difference we will make	Scottish Government outcomes
<p>Outcome 2 Our standards lead to a safe and skilled workforce</p>	<p>Priority 3 Social service qualifications and standards meet the needs of learners and employers</p>	<p>The SSSC is recognised as an organisation that contributes to social service workers having the skills needed for their jobs</p>	<p>We will work with partners to ensure that qualifications and standards continue to evolve to meet the changing needs of people who use services</p>	<p>Our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed</p> <p>We realise our full economic potential with more and better employment opportunities for our people</p>



OUR WORK AND THE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT OUTCOMES



Our strategic outcome	Our strategic priorities	Our strategic measures	The difference we will make	Scottish Government outcomes
<p>Outcome 3</p> <p>Our resources support the professional development of the social service workforce</p>	<p>Priority 4</p> <p>We work with Scottish Government and other partners to achieve the outcomes in 'Social Services in Scotland: a shared vision and strategy 2015-2020'</p>	<p>Social service workers report that our learning resources have improved their practice</p>	<p>Lifelong learning is at the heart of a professional, confident and valued workforce</p> <p>Our resources can support that learning to meet different learning styles, different learning environments and recognise the learning we all bring to our careers</p>	<p>Our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed</p> <p>We have improved the life chances for children, young people and families at risk</p> <p>We realise our full economic potential with more and better employment opportunities for our people</p>



OUR WORK AND THE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT OUTCOMES

Our strategic outcome	Our strategic priorities	Our strategic measures	The difference we will make	Scottish Government outcomes
<p>Outcome 4 Our stakeholders value our work</p>	<p>Priority 5 A customer focus throughout the organisation</p>	<p>Our customers are satisfied with the service they receive from the SSSC</p>	<p>As a public body we rely on stakeholders valuing the work we do and believing we are a transparent and efficient organisation</p>	<p>Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs</p>
	<p>Priority 6 High standards of governance</p>	<p>External audits provide evidence of good corporate governance and effective use of our resources</p>		





6. OPERATIONAL PLAN 2017/18

The operational plan sets out how we will work towards our strategic outcomes and focus on our strategic priorities during the financial year 2017/18.

The operational plan sets out an overview of our work and helps us define, organise and monitor it throughout the year.

Working towards our strategic outcomes and strategic priorities – year one (2017/2018)

Outcome 1: The right people are on the Register

Strategic priority	Activity in 2017/18	Lead officer	Operational measures	Strategic measure
Priority 1 Build our relationship with registrants and employers	Project 1a: Research phase - understanding registrants and developing resources Project 1b: Open the register for new groups Project 1c: Develop telephone system for a better customer experience	Head of Strategic Communications Registration Manager Registration Manager	Projects remain on target and resources delivered on time Projected registrations vs actual registrations Average time to complete application process	Registrants believe that registration with the SSSC provides positive benefits to them



**Outcome 1:** The right people are on the Register

Strategic priority	Activity in 2017/18	Lead officer	Operational measures	Strategic measure
Priority 2 Our fitness to practise process is proportionate and accessible	Project 2a: Help employers and registered workers understand when and how to make a referral Project 2b: How to support participants engage with the process Project 2c: How to increase representation at hearings	Head of Fitness to Practise Head of Corporate Governance and Hearings	Projects remain on target and resources delivered on time Projected referrals vs actual referrals % of hearings where worker attended % of hearings where representative attended % of cases closed per month as below threshold Average months taken to close a case Projected hearings vs actual hearings	Cases referred to FtP meet the thresholds A decrease in the time it takes to conclude fitness to practise cases





Outcome 2: Our standards lead to a safe and skilled social service workforce

Strategic priority	Activity in 2017/18	Lead officer	Operational measures	Strategic measure
<p>Priority 3 Social service qualifications meet the needs of learners and employers</p>	<p>Project 3a: Contribute to the review of National Occupation Standards led by Skills Development Scotland (SDS)</p> <p>Project 3b: Review Post-Registration Training and Learning (PRTL)</p>	<p>Head of Learning and Development</p>	<p>Projects remain on target and resources delivered on time</p> <p>% of UK qualification referrals resolved within 28 working days</p> <p>Average time to complete PRTL process</p>	<p>The SSSC is recognised as an organisation that contributes to social service workers having the skills needed to do their jobs</p>



Outcome 3: Our resources support the professional development of the social service workforce

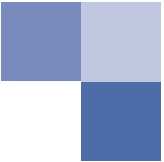
Strategic priority	Activity in 2017/18	Lead officer	Operational measures	Strategic measure
<p>Priority 4 We work with Scottish Government and other partners to achieve the actions in 'Social Services in Scotland a shared vision and strategy</p>	<p>Project 4a: Carry out an audit of our learning resources</p> <p>Project 4b: Work with Social Work Scotland, Iriss and other partners on delivering 'Enhancing Leadership Capability of Scotland's Social Services 2017-2020</p> <p>Project 4c: Implement the Palliative Care Framework with National Health Service Education Scotland (NES)</p> <p>Project 4d: Scope the workforce requirements for criminal justice social workers</p> <p>Project 4e: Deliver workforce requirements from the Carers Act</p> <p>Project 4f: Economic value of the social service workforce</p>	<p>Head of Learning and Development</p>	<p>Projects remain on target and resources delivered on time</p>	<p>The SSSC is recognised as an organisation that contributes to social service workers having the skills needed to do their jobs</p> <p>Social service workers report that our learning resources have improved their practice</p>



Outcome 4: Our stakeholders value our work

Strategic priority	Activity in 2017/18	Lead officer	Operational measures	Strategic measure
<p>Priority 6 High standards of governance</p>	<p>Project 6a: Develop and implement an online performance and governance system</p> <p>Project 6b: Training needs analysis of all staff</p> <p>Project 6c: Paperless financial transactions</p> <p>Project 6d: Develop a financial strategy that addresses the sustainability of the SSSC</p>	<p>Head of Performance and Improvement</p> <p>HR Manager</p> <p>Head of Finance</p> <p>Director of Corporate Services</p>	<p>Projects remain on target and resources delivered on time</p>	<p>External audits provide evidence of good corporate governance and effective use of our resources</p>

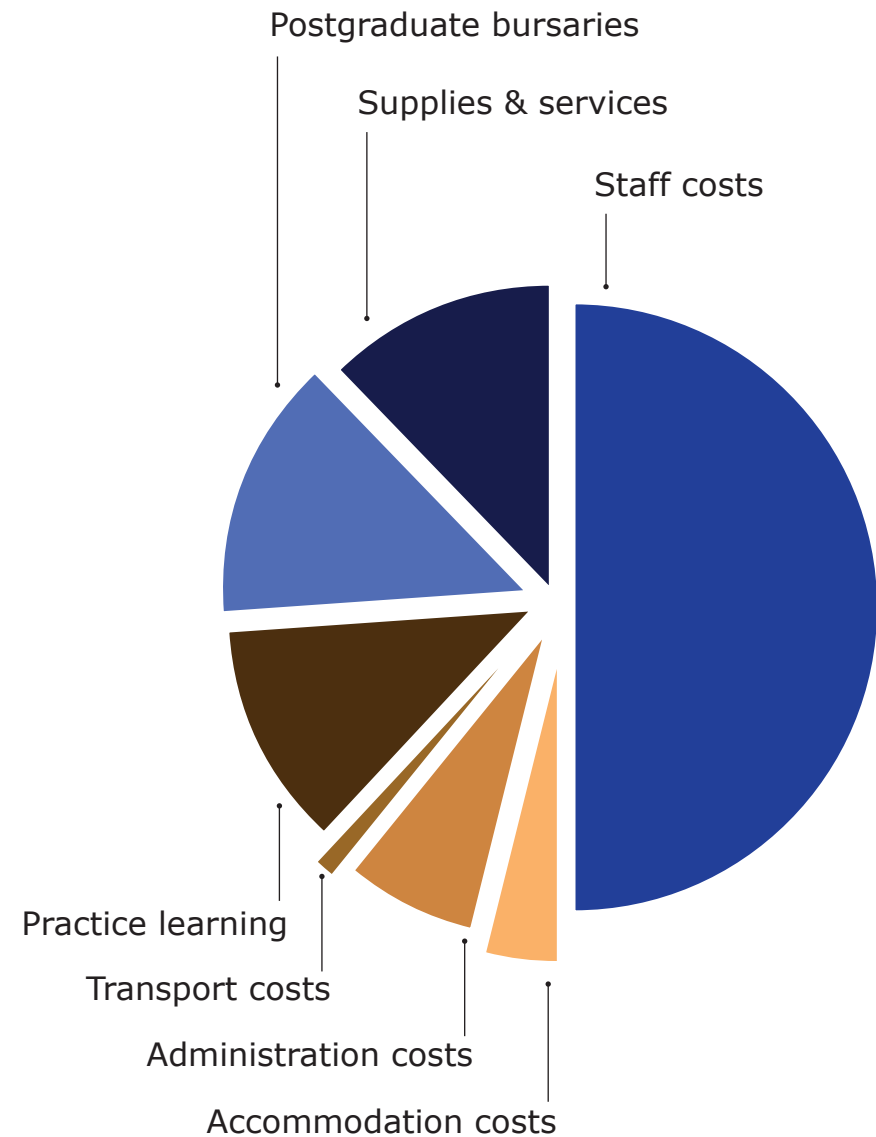




7. OUR RESOURCES – SSSC DRAFT BUDGET 2017/18

Draft Budget by Expenditure Type

	£ 000	%
Staff costs	9,854	50
Accommodation costs	767	4
Administration costs	1,477	7
Transport costs	221	1
Supplies & services	2,412	12
Postgraduate bursaries	2,655	14
Practice learning	2,352	12
Gross expenditure	19,738	100



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