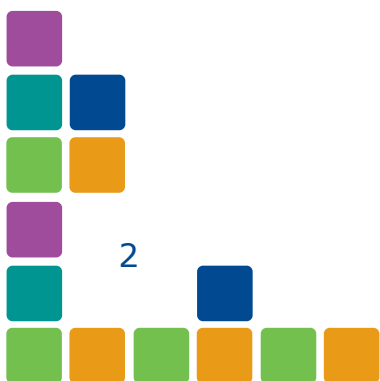


Scottish Social Services Council

Strategic Plan

2014 - 2017

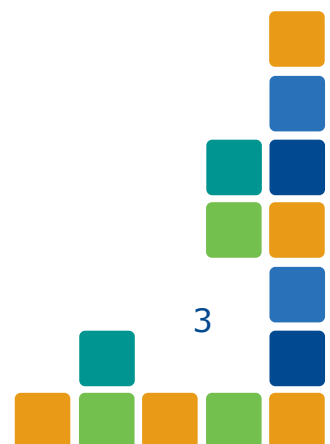


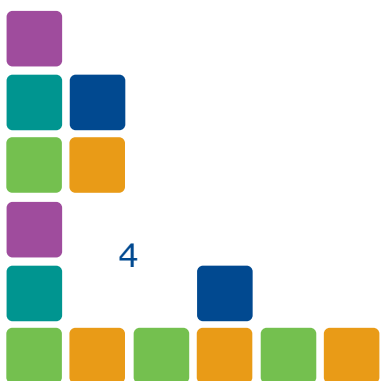




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Message from the Convener

This is my first strategic plan as the Convener of the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC) and one that will take us through significant changes both across the social service landscape and for Scotland. With my SSSC Council colleagues, officers, staff and our stakeholders, we are continually looking at the implications that major policy and legislative developments may bring so we can plan for and support the workforce for the future, making sure that public protection is at the heart of our work. This plan reflects that analysis and each year we will have an operational plan to support achievement of our outcomes.

In the lifetime of this strategic plan we will see many changes with significant policy developments now starting to take shape. These developments will affect the social service workforce, their roles and the skills they require. With our partners, we are ready to face the changing times ahead and this plan sets out our role.

Our central aim is improvement – over the next three years of this plan I want to see life for people using social services across the country improve. The part we play in that is to make sure we have the right people with the right skills in place.

As you read our plan you will find out about the growth in the SSSC Register that will happen over the next three years and at the end of 2017 we will have nearly 100,000 social service workers registered with the SSSC. This means 100,000 people who are qualified or are working towards their qualification. We believe this will support us in achieving our vision that our work means the people of Scotland can count on social services being provided by a trusted, skilled and confident workforce.

Going hand in hand with this growth will be an increase in the number of Fitness to Practise cases we will deal with. It is important to recognise that the vast majority of social service workers carry out their role with skill, a great deal of knowledge and compassion. But our role as the regulator means that we can ensure that this continues to be the case as we take action against that small minority who don't meet the standards that are needed to carry out these demanding and complex roles. To manage the increase in the number of Fitness to Practise cases we will continually review all our processes and timescales to make sure they are robust and protect the public.



Analysis of our Fitness to Practise cases helps us to develop learning that we can share with the sector. Along with our partners this is an important part in driving improvement.

Underpinning all our work set out in this plan are four priority areas which inform the Strategic Plan. The first of these is managing the increase in the numbers we will **register and regulate**. Through this work we will increase public protection and the number of people who can rely on a trained and trusted social service worker.

In relation to the **workforce** we will develop the learning strategy and ensure that we are working with our partners to build capacity and capability so we have the workforce needed for the future. Developing a safe and skilled workforce relies both on our regulatory work and our development work. It is not enough to remove people from the Register we must make sure that those who are on the Register continue to develop their skills.

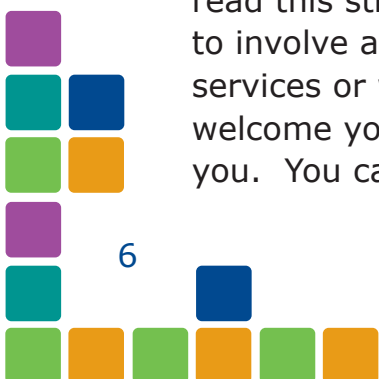
Innovation at the SSSC is crucial. To meet the demands on the organisation we must test new ways of doing our work. We have already developed learning technology and introduced IT systems to streamline our work. We will test out new thinking and develop more creative solutions to the challenges facing us.

The final underpinning priority is **how we work**. It is heartening to see in every staff survey carried out, the commitment we have from our staff to the work we do. They work hard to provide a service of the highest quality and a lot of time is put into consulting with our stakeholders. In the next three years the organisation will continue to grow so continuing to have committed and professional staff is vital.

In short, we are working to make the social service workforce the best it can be. The plan sets out the changes we want to make and the difference we want to see and the systems that will help us to achieve what is a big agenda.

I am confident that we will make real progress over the next three years, building on the strong foundations already in place. Please read this strategic plan to find out what we aim to do. We are keen to involve as many people as possible who are interested in social services or working in the sector in contributing to our work. We welcome your views and thoughts, and look forward to hearing from you. You can contact me directly, or any of my colleagues at SSSC.

Professor James McGoldrick



Our vision and strategic outcomes

Our vision:

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

The plan sets out the strategic outcomes that the SSSC will work towards in 2014 – 2017.

The results of our work will help us achieve the following strategic outcomes:

- 1 there is a safe, skilled, confident and flexible social service workforce with the appropriate values, knowledge, skills and qualifications for current and future sector needs
- 2 the SSSC is influential in policy making and the social services sector
- 3 the social service workforce is valued
- 4 qualifications for social service workers are fit for purpose
- 5 the right people are on the SSSC Register
- 6 the SSSC's resources, products and activities support the development of the workforce and increase its capacity and capability
- 7 the SSSC is recognised as a wellrun, well governed and effective organisation.

Contributing to the Scottish Government National Outcomes

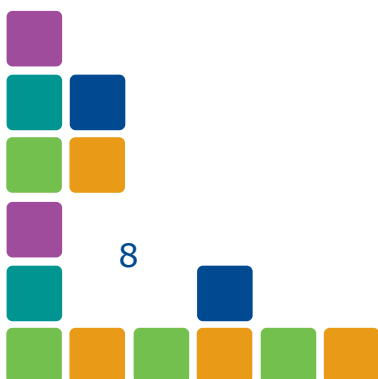
In working towards our vision and bringing about the change identified in our strategic outcomes, we will play our part in achieving the Scottish Government's National Outcomes. We believe that in our role as the regulator of the social service workforce and with responsibility for workforce planning and development for the social service workforce, the SSSC contributes to the achievement of eight National Outcomes, these are:



- we are better educated, more skilled and are successful, renowned for our research and innovation
- our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed
- we live longer, healthier lives
- we have improved the life chances for children, young people and families at risk
- our people are able to maintain their independence as they get older and are able to access appropriate support when they need it
- we reduce the local and global environmental impact of our consumption and production
- our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs.

As a significant employment sector in the Scottish economy, the social service workforce of around 191,000 people also makes an impact on the National Outcome:

- we realise our full economic potential with more and better employment opportunities for our people.



About the Scottish Social Services Council

The Regulation of Care (Scotland) Act 2001 established the SSSC. Our responsibilities set out in the Act are:

- to set up and maintain Registers of key groups of social service workers
- to publish Codes of Practice for all social service workers and their employers
- to regulate the education and training of the workforce
- to promote education and training
- to undertake the functions of the sector skills council; Skills for Care and Development (SfCD), this includes workforce planning and development.

Through these responsibilities our overarching aims are:

- to protect people who use services
- to raise standards of practice
- to strengthen and support the professionalism of the workforce.

Our values

- Integrity
- Commitment
- Accountability
- Pride in what we do
- Listening and engaging
- Learning and creativity

Setting our strategic plan in context

The Scottish Social Services Council has been considering the implications for social services likely to arise from key policy developments over the next few years so that we can plan and support the development of a workforce for the future. Within the three-year period of this strategic plan, there will be key national policy developments in the following areas - public service reform, integration of health and social care, integration of children's services, self-directed support and community empowerment. We consider



that these policy imperatives have the potential to impact significantly on the direction and development of the social service workforce.

We want to work towards strengthening the professionalism of the workforce, so that the unique contribution that the 191,000 people working in this sector make to the well-being of the people of Scotland and to the Scottish economy, is more clearly articulated, understood and valued, and that the social service workforce is the best that it can be.

For this workforce, there are particular pressures in relation to the change in task and role likely to happen as a result of self-directed support, the recent consultation on the future of criminal justice social work and the specific skills that social workers bring to risk management, professional judgement and enablement. The increasing emphasis on community-based support for older people as an alternative to hospital care will also highlight the role of the social service worker in enabling and supporting people to live independently for longer.

To make sure that we have a sufficiently skilled and competent workforce able to meet these new challenges, we will work in partnership with our stakeholders to develop an innovative and progressive approach to professional learning, which encompasses accredited learning (through qualifying and post-qualifying programmes) and the everyday workplace learning that is so vital to continuous professional development.

Public service reform demands a proactive, engaged workforce and we will work in a co-productive way with workers and employers to develop and implement this work, involving as many views and people as possible. To support this, we will review the impact of registering the people who work in social services, increasing the professionalism of the workforce through qualifications and the SSSC Codes of Practice and the learning from Fitness to Practise. This will help the workforce and the public, to have a robust, evidence-informed analysis of the impact registration and regulation have on the development of the social service workforce and protecting people who use social services. It is important that the regulatory framework supports and sustains the development of the social service workforce.



The Scottish Government is committed to social service workforce regulation as part of a framework for the delivery of better and safer social services. Around 60,000 people working in social services in Scotland are on the SSSC Register currently.

We are expecting around 33,465 applications between April 2014 and March 2017. Of these 26,000 is made up of applications from support workers in day care of children services (due to register by June this year) and support workers in adult care home services (due to register in September 2015). The remaining is an estimate of the number of applications we can expect to receive from supervisors and workers in housing support and care at home services by March 2017. This increase means that more services and care are delivered by a regulated and qualified workforce.

This significant increase will be challenging for the SSSC, for employers and for the workforce. We need to make sure that applications and renewals are processed efficiently, within agreed timescales and only those who are suitable and who remain suitable, are registered with the SSSC. This is likely to lead to an increase in the number of cases where further investigation is required before registration and where we investigate complaints made against registered workers. As registration of this workforce has become the norm, we have noticed an increase in the rate of referrals about individual practice and we expect this to continue to increase. We have also seen an increase in the seriousness and complexity of referrals. These factors all mean that there are increasing demands on our resources, skills and expertise and we have developed a growth strategy to manage this effectively over the coming years. However, regulation cannot be an end in itself, the end must be better outcomes and experiences for service users and carers, achieved through regulation and improvement. For that to be effective, regulators, employers, educators and the workforce need to work together so that we collectively maximise and optimise the impact of our individual contributions. We are committed to improving the outcomes and experiences of people who use social services and their carers and we have a significant contribution to make. This strategic plan explains our contribution to this national agenda over the next three years.



Our strategic map

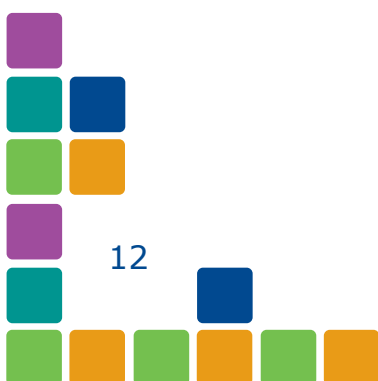
About our strategic planning process and our strategic map

The strategy map shows what we think are the most important chains of cause and effect ie the difference we think each of the actions will make. The arrows connecting the boxes represent our understanding of the most important cause and effect relationships between each element.

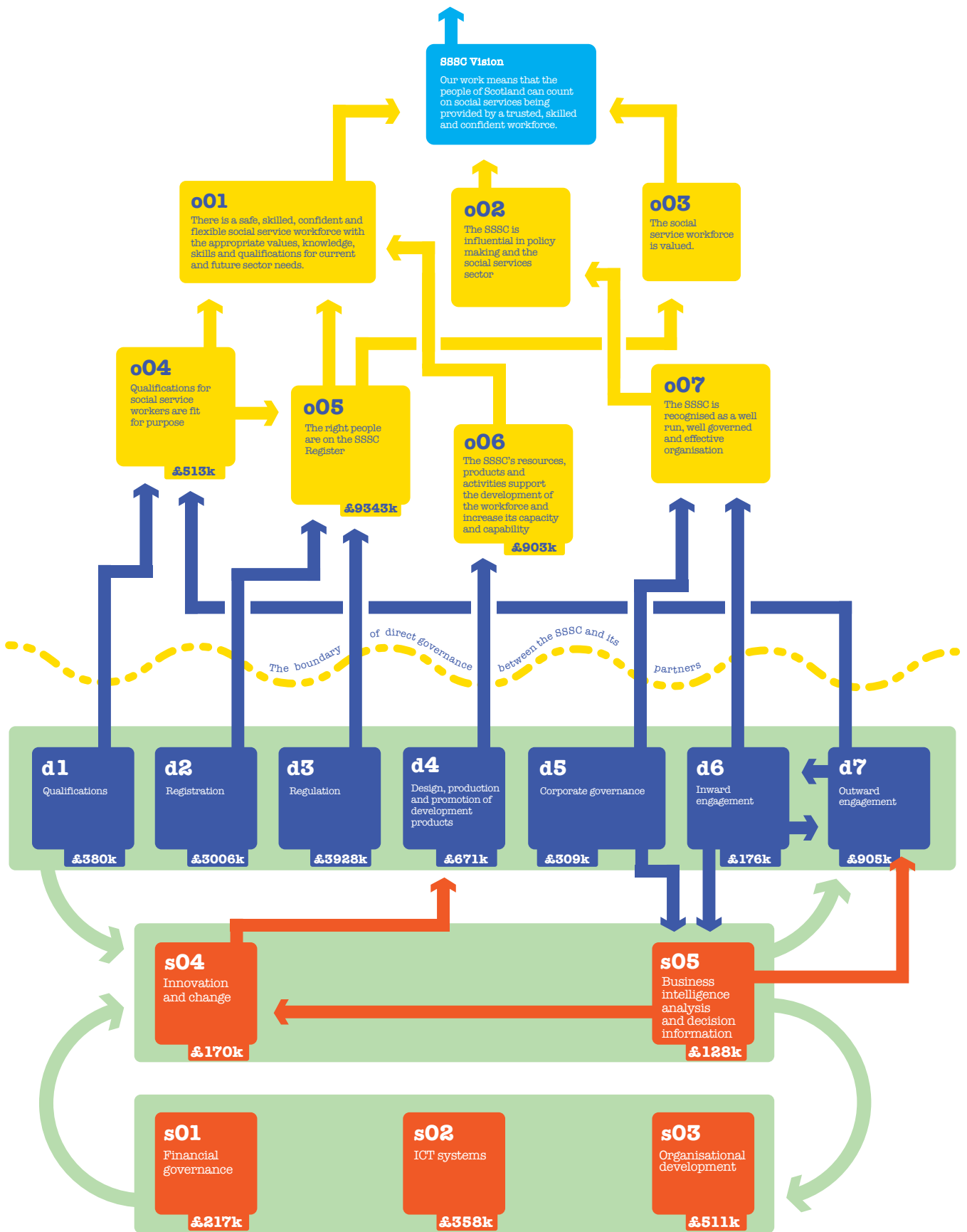
Reading the map from the bottom, it identifies the systems we must have in place and what we will deliver to achieve our outcomes. It also highlights the outcomes that the work of the SSSC has most direct impact on ie the early outcomes. In achieving our medium and long term outcomes we must work closely with our partners to bring about the changes needed to achieve our vision.

We want to clearly identify the change we aim to bring about and how we will measure and identify that change. To do this we asked 'what are the questions our stakeholders want answered to assure them we are making a difference?'

Over the life of this strategy we will use our performance measures and other information to check our understanding of the cause and effect connection between outcomes and our services and activities ie does our work do what we think it does?



Scottish Government National Outcomes



o Outcomes

d Services and activities with a **direct** impact on the outcome outside the SSSC

s Services and activities which have most of their impact in **supporting** other SSSC services and activities

Strategic outcome 1: There is a safe, skilled, confident and flexible social service workforce with the appropriate values, knowledge and skills to meet current and future sector needs

To achieve this strategic outcome we will:

- implement the Leadership Capacity Building Strategy
- develop and implement the Social Service Learning Strategy
- review the model of regulation and make recommendations for the future
- strengthen the SSSC Codes of Practice for Social Service Workers and Employers of Social Service Workers.

The questions we will answer to demonstrate the difference we are making

To what extent:

- are registered workers meeting qualification requirements
- are there professional learning pathways for social service workers
- does the model of regulation meet the needs of a changing workforce and changing approaches to service delivery
- does the SSSC Code of Practice for Employers support effective employer behaviours
- does the SSSC Code of Practice for Social Service Workers support appropriate values, behaviours and practices?

To measure our success there is evidence that shows:

- an increase in the number of workers who are meeting or exceeding minimum qualification requirements
- we meet the milestones for the development of the learning pathways
- the outcome of our review of the current model of regulation will reflect the views of our stakeholders and the evidence collected
- more employers and social service workers are aware of and understand their responsibilities to work according to the SSSC Codes of Practice
- an increase in the number of social service workers receiving induction on values, behaviour and practices which are informed by the Codes of Practice.

Strategic outcome 2: The SSSC is influential in policy-making and the social services sector

To achieve this strategic outcome we will:

- use our expertise and knowledge to influence policy discussions and consultations
- engage effectively with employers, representative bodies and social service workers about professional learning, professional practice and regulation
- bring the voice of the social service workforce into the national policy context

The questions we will answer to demonstrate the difference we are making

To what extent:

- does the SSSC influence Scottish Government policy development in social services
- does the SSSC influence the thinking and practice of the social service workforce
- does the social service sector believe that the SSSC is positively influencing the Scottish Government
- is the role of the SSSC understood and supported by Scottish Government, MSPs, social service employers and partner organisations
- is the SSSC valued by key stakeholders as integral to the achievement of a professional and safe social service workforce?

To measure our success there is evidence that shows:

- SSSC consultation responses and advice is included in Scottish Government policy
- employers, representative bodies and social service workers believe that the SSSC plays an important role in influencing policy, social service workers
- MSPs and other local and national politicians understand the work of the SSSC.

Strategic outcome 3: The social service workforce is valued

To achieve this strategic outcome we will:

- gather and share evidence of the value that the social service workforce provides
- promote the work of social service workers
- celebrate and share good practice
- promote social services as a positive career option.

The questions we will answer to demonstrate the difference we are making

To what extent:

- does the activity of the SSSC increase awareness of the contribution and value that the social service workforce makes to the people of Scotland
- does the work of the SSSC increase our partners' understanding of the contribution social service workers make to the people of Scotland
- do social service workers believe the work of the SSSC enhances the value of their role
- do people who use services and carers value the role of social service workers?

To measure our success there is evidence that shows:

- positive perceptions of social service career options among potential recruits and key agencies such as career services
- positive public perception of the value of the social service workforce
- positive media coverage of the social service workforce and the difference it makes
- positive views of the workforce among people who use social services and carers
- employers recognise the value of the social service workforce through changing key organisational performance questions to reflect and measure the value of social service work.

Strategic outcome 4: Qualifications for social service workers are fit for purpose

To achieve this strategic outcome we will:

- meet our obligations as the sector skills council for social services in Scotland
- regularly review and revise National Occupational Standards in partnership with employers so that they remain fit for purpose
- periodically review the qualification standards for registration so that they reflect changing job roles
- approve, quality assure and improve the qualifications for which we are responsible.

The questions we will answer to demonstrate the difference we are making

To what extent:

- do the qualifications for registration support the development of a safe, skilled and caring workforce
- do employers believe that qualifications deliver a competent and skilled workforce
- do workers believe their qualification has improved and developed their practice
- are employers involved in developing the National Occupational Standards
- are newly qualified social workers ready for their role
- is the SSSC driving improvement in qualification development and delivery?

To measure our success there is evidence that shows:

- employers' satisfaction with the quality of newly qualified social workers
- workers satisfaction with how their qualification has prepared them for work or improved existing practice
- National Occupational Standards reflect the needs of the sector
- changes made to the qualifications for which we are responsible reflect the views and needs of the sector.

Strategic outcome 5: The right people are on the SSSC Register

To achieve this strategic outcome we will:

- manage the increase in the number of workers applying to register or re-register efficiently and effectively
- make fair, transparent and lawful decisions regarding registration and fitness to practise
- make sure that the SSSC Register categories reflect the changing ways in which social services are being delivered
- work with our partners so that we are sharing the right information at the right time.

The questions we will answer to demonstrate the difference we are making

To what extent:

- are employers and the public confident that SSSC registration means the public are protected and workers are qualified
- are people working in the sector contrary to required registration?
- are employers and the workforce prepared for new parts of the SSSC Register opening
- do the registration processes and information help them to employ the right people
- do employers report workers who have breached the SSSC Code of Practice to the SSSC?

To measure our success there is evidence that shows:

- stakeholders, including the public, believe that regulation of the social service workforce is effective in keeping people who use social services safe
- increased awareness amongst relevant groups of their obligation to apply to register with the SSSC
- the percentage of referrals from employers that meet the threshold for a complaint
- the effectiveness of our collaborative partnerships, particularly in relation to information sharing, with other regulatory bodies and Disclosure Scotland.

Strategic outcome 6: The SSSC's resources, products and activities support the development of the workforce and increase its capacity and capability

To achieve this strategic outcome we will:

- work in partnership with employers and social service workers so that our resources and activities are effectively developed, targeted and prioritised
- regularly review and evaluate the impact of our activities/effectiveness of our resources
- increase our learning from Fitness to Practise casework and share this with employers and social service workers
- improve our capacity to support effective workforce planning.

The questions we will answer to demonstrate the difference we are making

To what extent:

- are our stakeholders involved in the prioritisation and design of our resources and activities
- are our resources and activities considered to be useful and effective in supporting workforce development
- can we evidence the impact of learning from Fitness to Practise casework on our resources and activities, including qualifications
- does our workforce information and data help employers with workforce planning
- is the workforce aware of our products, activities and resources
- is the workforce using our products and resources effectively and are we the provider of choice to organisations, particularly Scottish Government, for social service workforce development resources?

To measure our success there is evidence that shows:

- increased awareness of our products and resources
- employers believe that the workforce data produced by the SSSC helps them to make more effective workforce plans
- employers and social service workers who have attended our events and used our resources report that practice has improved
- our products and resources meet the sector's needs
- we are increasingly asked to develop workforce resources and support national workforce development initiatives.

Strategic outcome 7: The SSSC is recognised as a well governed and effective organisation

To achieve this strategic outcome we will:

- make sure that our staff are qualified, skilled and have sufficient capacity to deliver our agreed outcomes to a high standard
- review our Code of Corporate Governance
- implement a high quality leadership and management development programme
- demonstrate compliance with the Scottish Government's Corporate expectation of Public Bodies.
- regularly review the effectiveness of our stakeholder engagement

The questions we will answer to demonstrate the difference we are making

To what extent:

- is the SSSC believed to be a well-governed and effective organisation by Scottish Government, the social service workforce and other key stakeholders
- do external assessments indicate that the SSSC meets or exceeds governance standards
- do we demonstrate how our resources are being used to meet our outcomes
- are we a learning and improving organisation
- do we comply with legislation in relation to freedom of information, data protection and records management
- are we improving our services and processes to meet customer expectations
- do we ensure equality of opportunity in the organisation and externally
- are we a well-respected organisation among our stakeholders
- are we transparent in our decision-making?

To measure our success there is evidence that shows:

- we receive unqualified external audit reports
- external evidence of what works most effectively and efficiently

- stakeholders believe we are making a difference
- stakeholders believe they are able to influence our work
- the SSSC manages its information and records in compliance with legislation
- our Records Management Plan is approved by the Keeper of the Records of Scotland
- meeting Scottish Government's Corporate Expectations
- achieve the Silver Investors in People Award
- we meet the standards in Audit Scotland's Best Value toolkit on Governance and Accountability and compare our performance by benchmarking against other organisations

Effective use of our resources

Our budget for 2014/2015 is £15.891m. Of this figure £2.655m is for postgraduate bursaries and £2.477m for practice learning payments. An analysis of this budget by expenditure type is shown in the table below. This budget provides funding for the employment of 225.3 FTE staff.

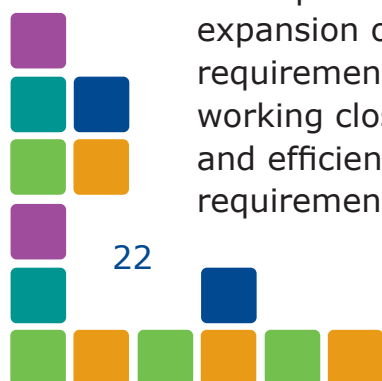
2014/15 Budget Summary

Expenditure & Income			Directly controlled by the SSSC	
	£m	%	£m	%
Staff costs	7.76	48.8	7.76	72.1
Accommodation costs	0.87	5.5	0.87	8.1
Administration costs	1.05	6.6	1.05	9.8
Transport costs	0.14	0.9	0.14	1.3
Supplies and Services	0.94	5.9	0.94	8.7
Postgraduate bursaries	2.66	16.7		
Practice Learning payments	2.48	15.6		
Total Expenditure	15.9	100.0	10.8	100.0
Grant in aid from Scottish Government	11.69			
Practice Learning fees	2.48			
Registration fees	1.59			
Other income	0.14			
Total Income	15.9			

Additional grants totalling approximately £1.6m are being negotiated for the 2014/15 financial year.

The strategic plan covers three financial years, 2014-15, 2015-16 and 2016-17. The majority of our funding comes from Scottish Government who confirm the funding on an annual basis. We liaise closely with the Scottish Government on the implications of our medium term plans.

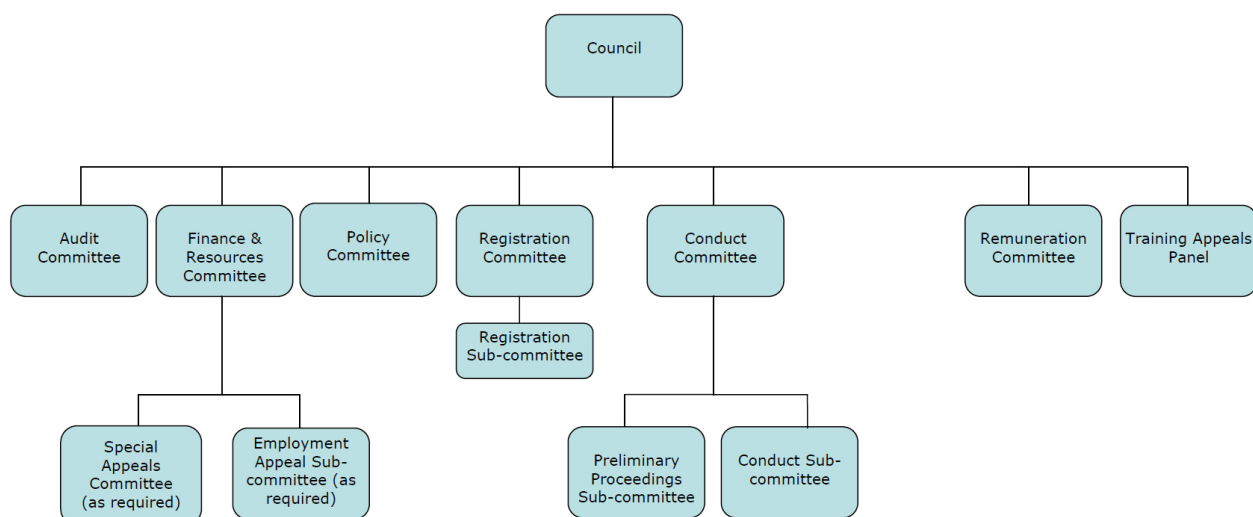
We expect activity to continue to rise in line with the planned expansion of the Register. We anticipate that the 2015-16 budget requirements will be broadly in line with the 2014-15 level and we are working closely with Scottish Government to identify potential costs and efficiency measures that would impact on the 2016-17 budget requirement.



Governance of the Scottish Social Services Council

Scottish Social Services Council

Committee Structure



The Council is made up of a Convener and nine Council Members, all of whom are appointed by Scottish Ministers through open competition.

The membership reflects a wide range of interests. The Council Members work together to achieve the strategic vision of the Scottish Social Services Council and has overall responsibility for the strategic direction of the SSSC. The Council also ensure that our work is achieving the outcomes set out in the Strategic Plan and that these outcomes are achieved efficiently and effectively with clear evidence to demonstrate success.



How the Council undertakes its role

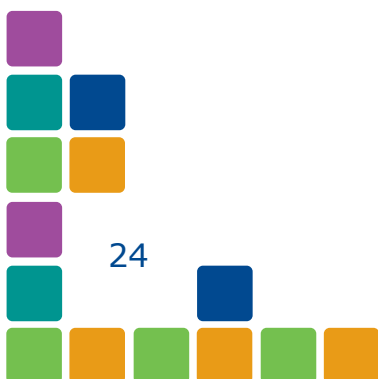
Council Members are subject to the Ethical Standards in Public Life etc. (Scotland) Act 2000 and the SSSC Code of Conduct which has been approved by Scottish Ministers. The key principles which underpin the Code are based on the principles of public life set down by the Committee on Standards in Public Life (originally 'the Nolan Committee'). The key principles are:

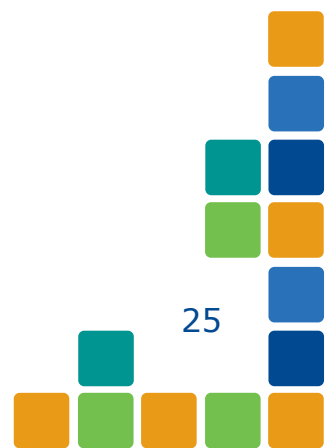
- public service
- selflessness
- integrity
- objectivity
- accountability and stewardship
- openness
- honesty
- leadership and
- respect

Council members also work to the six core principles set out in the Good Governance Standard for Public Services, which are:

- focusing on the organisation's purpose and on outcomes for citizens and service users
- performing effectively in clearly defined functions and roles
- promoting values for the whole organisation and demonstrating the values of good governance through behaviour
- taking informed, transparent decisions and managing risk
- developing the capacity and capability of the governing body to be effective
- engaging stakeholders and making accountability real.

The quarterly Council meetings are held in public and the minutes of each meeting are available on our website.





Scottish Social Services Council



Scottish Social
Services Council

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